ENVIRONMENT

A Firing Squad for Buffalo

Montana-style hunting

On a recent Montana morning, 10 hunters formed a ragged line in the snow while a lone dog coaxed 20 bison off the road and across a field. When the milling beasts were about 50 yards away, state wildlife officials gave a signal and, one by one, the hunters pulled their triggers. Four bison fell immediately; the others trotted away a few feet and stood still, awaiting the next fusillade. The kill rate was 100 percent. "There really isn't anything to it," says Robert Adair, who bagged a 900-pound cow with a single shot. "It's like shooting beef."

Big game hunting it's not. The annual hunt is more like a firing squad: American plains bison, or buffalo, have been sentenced to capital punishment for trespassing. Under a 1985 Montana law, any bison that wander out of Yellowstone National Park must be killed because ranchers fear the animals will infect cows with brucellosis, a bacterial disease that makes cows abort. Brucellosis aside (there has not been a single documented case of bison in the wild transmitting the disease to cattle), the bison also trample fences and compete with cattle for grass. Because the summer drought and infamous fires left too little winter forage in Yellowstone, record numbers of bison are meandering off federal lands into Montana. By late last week 467 had been shot and as many as 650 could die by mid-March. The Yellowstone herd, at 2,700 strong the largest free-roaming pack in the country, can probably withstand such losses. But the hu abou Ser ural anyt peop stupi says Fund for Animals.

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His group and others have called on the Park Service to feed the bison during winter emergencies so they won't go foraging in Montana. But putting out bales of hay on a regular basis could turn the symbol of America's West into mere pets. Similarly, because the Park Service does not want to interfere with nature, it won't treat the bison for brucellosis.

Crying wolf: The other option is preventing the bison from leaving the park. Two years ago the Fund for Animals sued the Park Service to make officials do just that. The suit was dismissed, but it prompted the service to cast around for ways to curtail the migrants. Like the proverbial 800-pound gorilla, however, bison—which can reach 2,000 pounds—go where they please. They simply walked over or around a cattle guard and a 300-foot-long wire fence and hardly missed a step when assaulted with recorded wolf howls and the cacophony of workers banging metal pans. Ironically, says Park biologist Mary Meagher, the animals may have found other exodus routes besides their usual path along the Yellowstone River.

It's doubtful that drought and fire will again combine to produce such poor foraging in Yellowstone anytime soon, but Meagher suspects that bison will move into Montana for reasons other than food scarcity in the park. The bison may be "recolonizing what was a historic habitat a century ago," she says. "This is a very directed movement. Those animals have a destination." She's not sure, but they may be propelled by an atavistic memory of the time when 200 million bison stretched across the plains from horizon to horizon. Thus the hunt will probably remain an annual rite. The only real alternative may be to revive an earlier bison-management policy: annual hunts *within* the boundaries of Yellowstone.

SHARON BEGLEY *with* TAD BROOKS *in Helena, Mont.*

RELIGION

His Master's Voice

Buddhism teaches that ordinary life is grounded in illusion, a state that can be overcome only by submitting to the directives of an enlightened spiritual master. What happens, though, when the master himself is under the illusion that he is so enlightened that he can ignore the moral precepts of the Buddha—and the biological facts of life? These are the questions facing the estimated 4,000 members of the Vajradhatu International Buddhist Church, the largest branch of Tibetan Buddhism in the United States. Its 45-year-old leader, Osel Tendzin, has acknowledged that he contracted the AIDS virus four years ago but continued to have sex with some male members of the church.

Tendzin, born Thomas Rich in Passaic, N.J., is said to have confessed to a recent meeting of his followers that he thought he could overcome the effects of the disease through a change in his "karma." "Thinking that I had some extraordinary means of protection," he said, "I went ahead with my business as if something would take care of it." Last month the church's directors asked Tendzin to quit his teaching post, but so far he has refused.

To many American Buddhists, the scandal in the Vajradhatu church came as no surprise. Tendzin's charismatic predecessor, Chogyam Trungpa, Rinpoche (master), a renegade Tibetan monk who founded the movement in 1970, was a sexual libertine who lectured with a glass of sake in his hand. "There's a real confusion about whether Buddhism is or is not a tradition which emphasizes ethical behavior, particularly because of the way it's been taught in this country," says Yvonne Rand, a priest at the San Francisco Zen Center. But in traditional Buddhism, there is no doubt that sex with students, and between men, is sin. "A wise man," the Buddha taught, "should avoid unchastity as if it were a pit of burning cinders."

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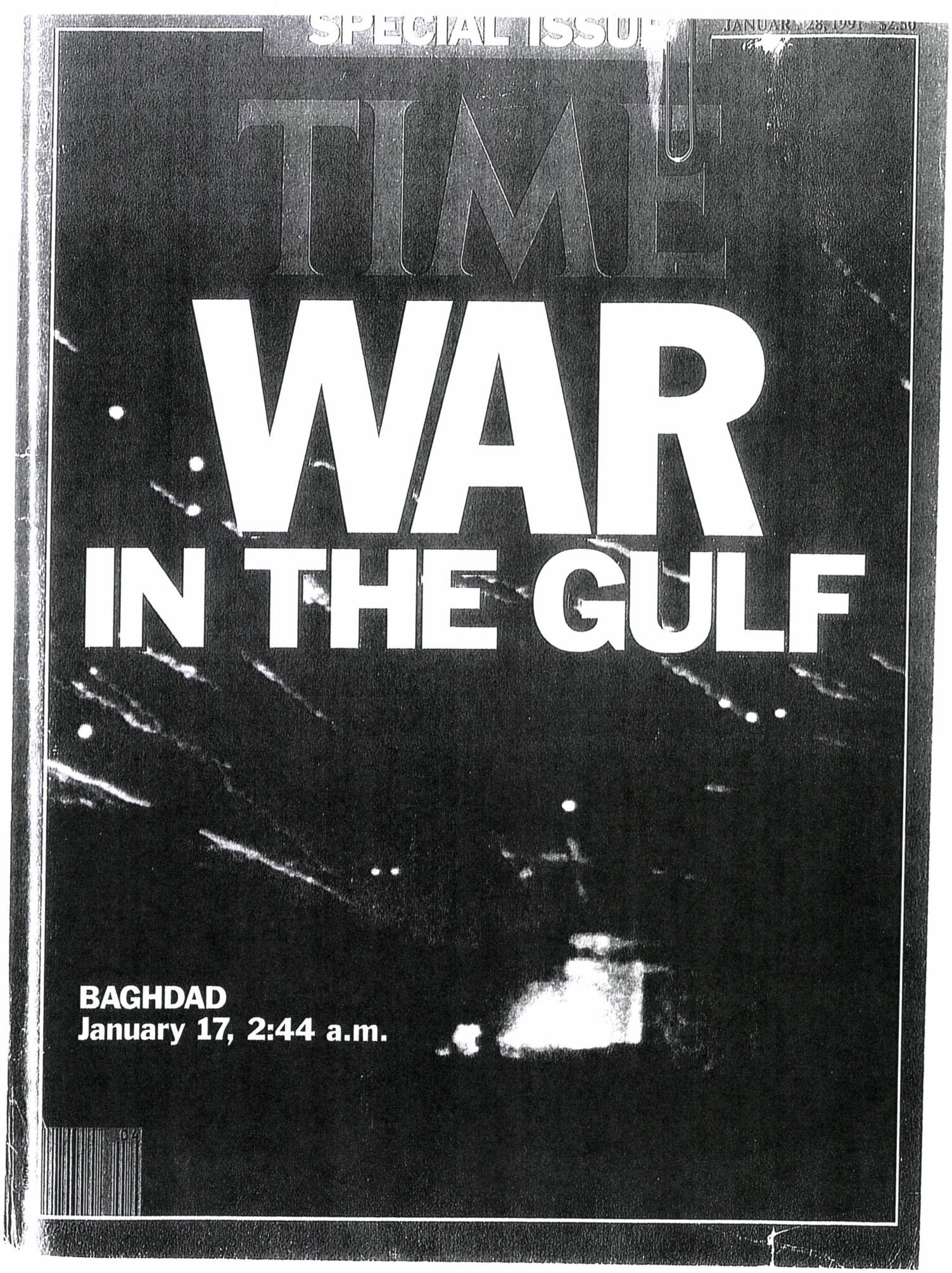
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O Give Them a Home

In the lands where the buffalo roam, cattlemen clash with protesters over slaughtering Yellowstone's wanderers

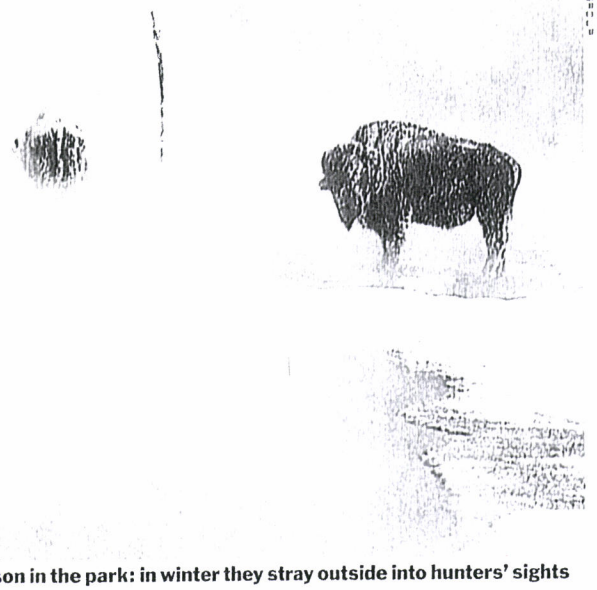
By NANCY GIBBS

Among their inalienable, God-given, federally guaranteed rights, Montana cattlemen claim the privilege of grazing their herds on public lands from June through October, while they grow hay for winter feed on their own spreads. Thus is born each year a battle between ranchers, environmentalists and state officials over how to manage the wild animals that roam out of Yellowstone Park, deplete the forage and interfere with the cattle grazing on the surrounding public lands. Last week the battle raged in the courts, as animal-rights activists lost—at least for now—a fight to block another season of slaughter of the very symbol of the U.S. Department of the Interior: the American bison.

Each winter bison, elk and other wildlife wander out of the park in search of food, and each winter they risk being shot on sight. Since 1985 the killings have been sanctioned by state officials under pressure from ranchers to protect the local cattle industry that relies on the public lands around the park. The huge, shaggy bison not only can damage fences; about half the Yellowstone herd is also thought to carry brucellosis, an infectious disease that can cause cows to abort their calves. Montana cattle have been certified brucellosis-free since 1983, but ranchers fear that if the sick bison infect their herds, the result could be quarantine, slaughter and economic ruin.

But the policy of hunting down the stray bison has been a public relations disaster. Of the park's 2,700 bison, 700 were killed by last spring, and an additional 11 have been slain this winter. The hunt is hardly sporting, protesters claim, since the Yellowstone bison have been conditioned not to view humans as enemies. "These animals are used to the click of the camera, not the crack of the rifle," argued Wayne Pacelle, national director of the Fund for Animals, in an editorial in *USA Today*. "When the hunters approach, the animals don't flee. They merely stare at their bloodthirsty executioners." Last year three antihunting protesters were arrested and charged with attacking hunters and game wardens with cross-country ski poles.

Such tactics have raised the hackles of Montanans, who do not take kindly to outside interference by what Ron Marlenee, a Republican U.S. Representative, calls "Eastern tinhorn snake-oil salesmen." Marlenee has introduced legislation in Congress that would prohibit interference with the bison hunters on public land. A similar bill failed to pass during the last session.



Bison in the park: in winter they stray outside into hunters' sights

On the other side, the Fund for Animals filed suit in federal court seeking an injunction against the hunt. The protesters contended that there was no proof that Yellowstone bison are a danger to livestock. The strain of brucellosis found in bison may not be virulent enough to pose a significant risk to domestic cattle. "They're making policy without data," charges biologist and bison researcher Jay Kirkpatrick. Says Pacelle: "If people want to graze cattle on the Yellowstone ecosystem, they need to assume some limited risk."

Last week a U.S. district judge in Montana rejected such arguments and denied the request by the Fund for Animals to stop the bison hunt. Citing the threat that brucellosis infection will spread to cattle, Judge Charles Lovell maintained that "hunting is a time-honored avocation and a legitimate and recognized method of animal control." The Fund for Animals promptly filed an appeal.

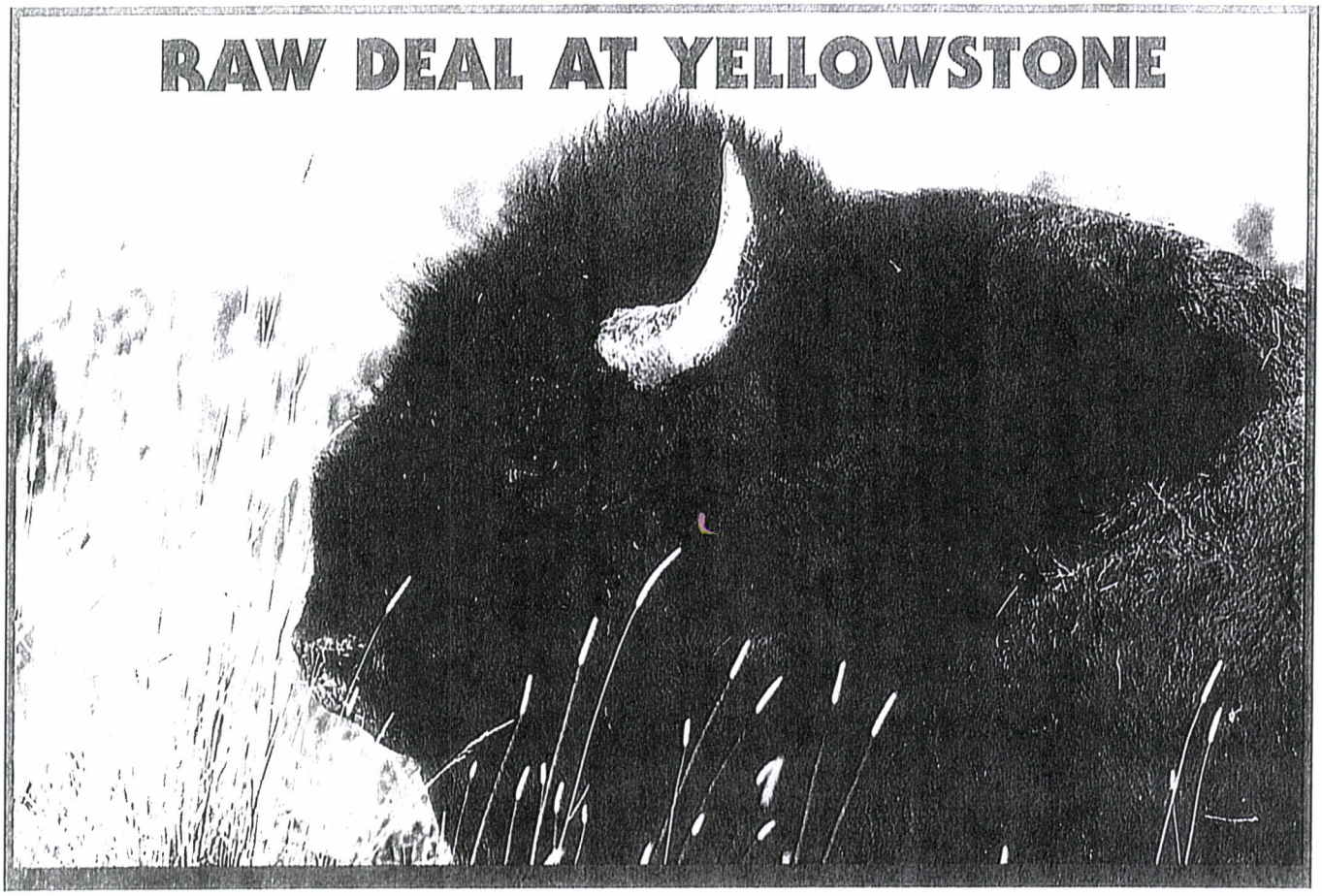
Jim Peterson, executive vice president of the Montana Stockgrowers Association, points out that a state regulation requires animals infected with brucellosis to be quarantined and slaughtered. "We have to move quickly and sensibly to disarm a potential time bomb," he wrote in a published statement. "No one likes the thought of killing buffalo, but rarely has the control of disease been pleasant."

Many ranchers feel that the threat from contaminated wildlife is a government problem but complain that federal policy has just made matters worse. They argue that Yellowstone's herds of elk and bison are overpopulating and overgrazing the park's ranges and forage base and that park managers are doing nothing to control the problem—all in the name of natural management. "The National Park Service is causing damage by letting nature take its course," charges rancher Pete Story. "Only through management by man can the park be kept in a natural state. Our fear is not nature; it's what government does about it."

The goal for both sides should be a flexible plan designed to keep wildlife and livestock herds apart. One recommendation calls for restricting cattle grazing on public lands during the high-risk months, closing some public grazing lands altogether and creating a livestock-free zone around the park. There are also humane, if artificial, ways of controlling the herds, such as using cattle dogs to keep the bison in the park. Cattlemen oppose a plan to reintroduce wolves to the Yellowstone ecosystem to help restore a natural predator for the bison on the ground that the wolves would soon be preying on cattle herds.

State representative Bob Raney plans to introduce a bill in the Montana legislature that would suspend bison-hunting licenses until a joint state-federal study on the problem is completed. "My problem at this point," says Raney, "is that we're killing off American bison without knowing if there is an alternative to killing them. I know what we've done up to this point is not proper." Especially considering that the victims are direct descendants of the 20 bison that originally sought refuge in the park and thereby survived the 19th century slaughter that all but eliminated the species from North America. —***Reported by Patrick Dawson/ Billings***

RAW DEAL AT YELLOWSTONE



One of Yellowstone's bison in better days

© Ron Bohr

Yellowstone Park has two catastrophes now, not one. The buffalo massacre was the meanest hunt of its kind and it changed fish and wildlife officers in Montana into great white hunters.

It takes plenty of power to fell a buffalo. Even when you knock them down, they're apt to get up again. So it's possible the hunter's first mistake was using what an experienced gunman would call "a light load." You couldn't tell because the hunter, asked for one of his bullets so the investigator from API could see what he was using, wouldn't allow a look. A lighter load could mean less of a recoil but more chance the buffalo wouldn't go down and stay down.

The hunter happened to be 80 years old, proud enough to admit it, sighting down a telescopic sight that brought a single buffalo, from a band of twenty or so, right in front of his eyes, big as a truck. The rifle should have been a smooth killer machine, a 30.06, but something did go wrong. Terribly wrong.

That first killing shot he was going to fire was supposed to slam the buffalo's skull at four to six inches behind the horn. And he hit the skull with the first shot. Wrong part of it, though. The bullet slammed the horn itself, right at the base. The buffalo went down and then was up again. Easy animal to hit, hard to kill.

The second shot hit the buffalo in the left hindquarters behind the rib cage. Now it was not just up, it was running pell mell while other buffalo in the band were inattentive, snuffing through the snow for food, too hungry to be distracted. The 80-year-old hunter and an officer from Montana Fish and Wildlife (MFW) were double-teaming the buffalo. The officer had been converted into what amounted to "a great white hunter paid by the taxpayers." His job: make sure the hunter bagged his trophy.

The hunter alone couldn't quite do it. That became the problem. A reporter had watched in disgust, on another range, while one of those hunters — they were lined up, some of the time, like kids at a carnival shooting gallery — had taken 15 shots in order to make the kill. The kills did happen, though. Unlike almost any other hunt in memory, the success ratio for the buffalo lottery hunters was 100 percent. The 80-year-old had his buffalo three quarters dead but for some reason — it was the pick of the band, the mightiest buffalo out there — it declined to die. Shot number three

hit, then number four. One caught the shoulder, the other the chest. The buffalo stumbled on.

And now came the extraordinary finale, something Montana voters could not have been envisioning when they voted "Yes" on the buffalo lottery. As the hunter went to take his fifth shot, he dry-fired (he'd forgotten to reload) and the game officer, falling into the pattern of what films portray as the great white hunter's role, took over. He called up his own gun; he had to send for it — it was back down the road. Then he took two shots of his own, finishing the buffalo with the second. The hunter did the maiming, the officer did the killing.

Carcass and head went to the hunter, his trophy.

It was a partnership against the bison. Nearly everyone who saw it, saw the tameness of the hunt, the tameness of the buffalo, the ducks-in-a-shooting-gallery atmosphere that was taking buffalo lives by the hundreds, recognized it as a partnership against all principles of sportsmanship. Even some of the hunters felt that way. But they wanted a buffalo head badly enough to discount the ugliness of the way they were getting it.

A bull elk

© *Claude Steelman*

Yellowstone and the second catastrophe

Nobody in the park echelons with any clout at all wanted to admit that an historic, tragic fire was now being followed by an historic, tragic animal wipeout. It meant submitting to a state wildlife officer on every count. He told you who would shoot first (it was how fast your lottery number had come up). He told you where you would shoot from, which buffalo you could go for (no problem there, he picked out the top animal still alive — the one that would look great as a trophy and not the one that looked like it might pitch over dead from exhaustion). You got the instruction on where to aim. But there was a fringe benefit to all this regimentation. If you couldn't finish the kill, the officer was duty-bound not to let it bleed to death — he'd have to kill it for you. His kill, your prize.

Each hunter paid $5 to be in the Montana buffalo lottery. If you "won" the lottery, they didn't pay you, you paid them: another $200. That was the price to Montanans. Out-of-state hunters who "won" paid $1,000.

Out there on the property of The Church Universal and Triumphant, where the folks raised vegetables in greenhouses right through the sub-zero temperatures, the head man at the church, Ed Francis, was called "business manager" and the vegetable growers were dressed, somebody said, "like street people from Southern California." Not the right duds for a Montana winter but it might get better. A perfectly legal scam had set in. You paid the church a loading fee for buffalo killed on their property. Although other property owners became receiving areas for ambling buffalo, the church lands (formerly the mighty Royal Teton Ranch which had belonged to wealthy publisher Malcolm Forbes) was the big coming-out place for the buffalo as they trailed out of Yellowstone. In order to let folks shoot buffalo on their land, the church had to apply for a depredation permit, alleging the damage buffalo would cause to ranchland or possibly by infecting livestock (in theory this could happen but it hasn't and MFW, pious about the need to "protect livestock from brucellosis," ignored the fact that driving the buffalo back in the park would keep the livestock safe).

How did the church want to reward those hunters for gunning down those supposedly dangerous buffalo? By soaking them as big as the state would go along with. Allegedly, they had tried to go for a $200-per-buffalo fee of their own, but the state made them tone it down to $50. How desperate the church was not to have buffalo on their land wasn't evident from their tactics. The API team photographed a pickup from the ranch driving the buffalo toward the hunting area instead of back toward the park.

A strange sort of hunt? One of the strangest ever held in those western territories where it had taken a hundred years for the nearly extinct buffalo to make any sort of comeback.

How far did the killing spree go on this year's exodus? The numbers tell it quickly. Thirty-three buffalo had died under the gun in the previous year, the number by early winter of 1989 had surged toward 500 and *Newsweek* projected a toll of 650 by mid-March. This was from a northern herd of 838 animals. In the park at large there had been, in November before the buffalo began what was supposed to be their escape to find food, 2700 buffalo in the three herds. Animals in all the herds were in danger from "winter kill" (death from starvation and exhaustion) and not from hunters. The park began by admitting the winter kill would probably be 10 percent of the buffalo, later conceded that it was looking

more like 15. And that didn't count the hunt. If buffalo came out on the Wyoming side of Yellowstone, folks down there were feeding them, not shooting them. If they came out on the Montana side, they were almost surely goners, especially if not too puny. The hunters didn't want puny ones.

The posse that came too late

Three years ago, the Animal Protection Institute had advised, and pleaded, with Yellowstone officials to become active in defense of their animals, especially the entirely defenseless buffalo. Superintendent Robert Barbee eventually agreed to try cattleguards and other barriers to block some of the buffalo passageways out of the park. The park believed it wouldn't make much difference — the big bulls would ram through obstacles and others would "go around the mountain." Kill numbers for three years were nothing like those of '89. This year, as API Investigator Robert Hillman returned to Yellowstone (he had inspected it when those barriers went up long before the sweeping blazes that created this year's big drive for food), he noticed something missing. The most strategic of the cattleguards.

The park's assistant superintendent Ben Clary said well, the buffalo would have headed around the mountain anyway so why not have it down. Had it done harm being there? No, not harm, Clary said. Then why not put it back up? No answer.

It has been like that during the long, stormy siege of humane workers who exhort a change at Yellowstone but run into the implacability of officials who are willing to see the hunt (it keeps park officials from inflaming Montana's most ardent hunters) as "population control" of the buffalo. At API's Forum '88 it was predicted that the aftermath of the fire could become a raging tragedy for Yellowstone's animals. The survivors, and most did survive for the animals had been smarter about the fires than the humans, would now face a more momentous danger if the park happened to be loose in its protective planning in the aftermath of the fire. By the time the kill by hunters had gone to 100 buffalo, surging immediately to three times more than the year before, API was trying to alarm both park officials and MFW that this was the year when the hunt could go to unpredictable proportions. As the hunt started to race at unprecedented levels, national media missed the story. Trying to put Associated Press on the case, so America would at least know what was happening, API went on a trail that led to a single reporter in Bozeman, Montana. She finally wrote what was really happening on Yellowstone's northern border. Then, at last, a report on how the hunt was going — how quickly it had become the meanest event of its kind — finally began a whistlestop tour of American media. Sort of a *slow* whistlestop tour; but *Time* talked to API, and *Newsweek* followed *Time*'s quarter-page with almost a full page. With hundreds of buffalo dead, the alarm finally was starting.

On its mission into hunter territory, API picked up videotape of the hunt which struck officials at the Institute as "historic footage." It was provided to all networks as a goad to get them to use it (CBS did) or send their own cameramen to the scene to show, simply by photographing the full outrageousness of the hunt, the extraordinary and wrongheaded disaster which MFW was fomenting and which Yellowstone — by not becoming active in defense of its animals — was allowing. And so the report on the Yellowstone misadventures finally surfaced in big media. It gave a chance for a posse to form: that unwieldy posse, the American public, which becomes very enraged but can take a long time to organize. Enough of a posse has formed that Superintendent Barbee agreed that in advance of next year's hunt he would indeed counsel with the Animal Protection Institute, as well as the "hunter-conservationists" like the Rocky Mountain Elk Association and those MFW folks who had contended all through this crisis that Yellowstone would not be allowed to try and take its animals back in the park and that it was "a jurisdictional matter."

What did Yellowstone officials learn from the great fire? They learned they could get "happy press" by predicting that, lo and behold, the burnoff would now lead, in the fire-razed areas, to splendid new browsing, a wonderful new food supply for the animals. Those who saw the buffalo shootdown at close hand were apt to say, "*What* animals?" Who was happy about this? The fireplace walls in hunter-homes all over Montana and far beyond were happy. After all, there is something majestic there now above the fireplace. Staring from the wall now is a uniquely moving, solemnly portentous, wearily contemplative face. The age-old face of the American bison — who really doesn't deserve to be treated like a plastic duck in a carnival shooting gallery. — *T.C.*

Bison Hunt Video Available

The API news-documentary *Exodus at Yellowstone: The Second Catastrophe*, which was beamed via space satellite to hundreds of TV stations all over the nation, is available to *Mainstream* readers at a nominal fee ($22 for a purchase, $5 to rent with a $15 returnable deposit). Half-inch VHS copies for home viewing (specify if you need a different size or type). This is a close-up on a heart-rending saga — and copies have gone to Interior Department officials so they'll see exactly the carnage caused by failure to move in and protect the buffalo.

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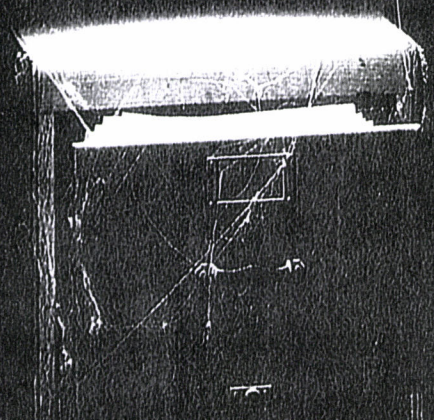

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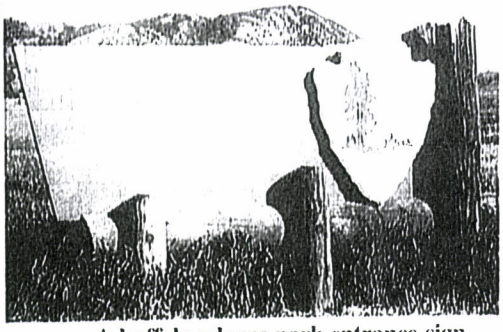
Montana Buffalo Hunt Wounds Park's Image

SUMMARY: Many a discouraging word has been heard ever since Montana began allowing massive shootings of buffalo roaming out of Yellowstone National Park. Animal rights activists vow to stop the so-called harvest, while the state demands that rangers take some of the flak for shooting the very symbol of the Park Service.

One cold winter day two years ago, a group of hunters gathered outside Yellowstone National Park to participate in what some of them euphemistically called "a bison harvest." As cameras from the major networks rolled, hunters walked up to 2,000-pound buffalo munching on nearby grass and fired their rifles at point-blank range. To viewers all over America, the Montana hunt, in which



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

A buffalo adorns park entrance sign.

569 buffalo were killed by hunters chosen by lottery, seemed more like an execution than a sport. As K. L. Cool, the director of Montana's Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, later acknowledged: "It does not require any skill in tracking. It does not require fair chase principles. . . . It's like shooting cattle in a feed yard."

Montana's Legislative Assembly authorized the hunt to prevent the spread of brucellosis, a disease carried by about half of Yellowstone's bison that causes cattle to abort their calves. But it quickly became a public relations nightmare.

As hundreds of the bison slumped to the ground, the Fund for Animals, a national animal protection group that opposes all hunting, used the event and another bison hunt last year to mount a nationwide campaign against the buffalo shoot. The result: a torrent of bad publicity for Montana, a state accustomed to being thought of as progressive in its wildlife management.

This winter, as bison once again begin to wander across park boundaries, plans by the state to allow another shoot could claim more victims than just the buffalo. High on the list of public relations casualties sit two of America's most durable institutions: the park ranger and the sport hunter.

Weary of complaints about the sight of hunters gunning down buffalo outside one of America's most cherished national parks, Montana Gov. Stan Stephens has demanded that the National Park Service share in the blame by helping hunters and game wardens shoot the animals. The Park Service, in the midst of developing a long-range plan for controlling the herds, compromised by agreeing to have its rangers shoot cow bison if they leave the park this winter as expected.

Under the terms of the so-called final interim plan for this winter, state game wardens and hunters chosen by lottery would continue to take part in the hunt. But in an unexpected twist, Montana's Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks announced that the hunters would be restricted if their presence would "provide a forum for antihunting activists."

Ron Aasheim, a spokesman for the department, says it is developing plans to rope off reporters and photographers, perhaps as far away as a quarter-mile from the shooting, to protect the activists from injury but also to keep the media from obtaining video footage that would "portray hunting in an inaccurate fashion."

The plan's insistence that rangers take part in the killing has some Park Service officials a bit nervous. The buffalo, after all, is emblazoned on every ranger's arrowhead shoulder patch as the symbol of the Park Service and on the sign that welcomes the 2.5 million people who visit the park annually.

"The idea of National Park Service rangers shooting these animals does not wash down well," says Yellowstone National Park Superintendent Robert Barbee. "But my answer to the critics is more of a question: What's the alternative?"

Wayne Pacelle, national director of the Fund for Animals, says, "The eyes of all America are watching. The Park Service is not going to benefit by having the public see its rangers shoot its very symbol."

While park rangers brace for the fallout, an increasing number of Montana state officials and opinion leaders have warned

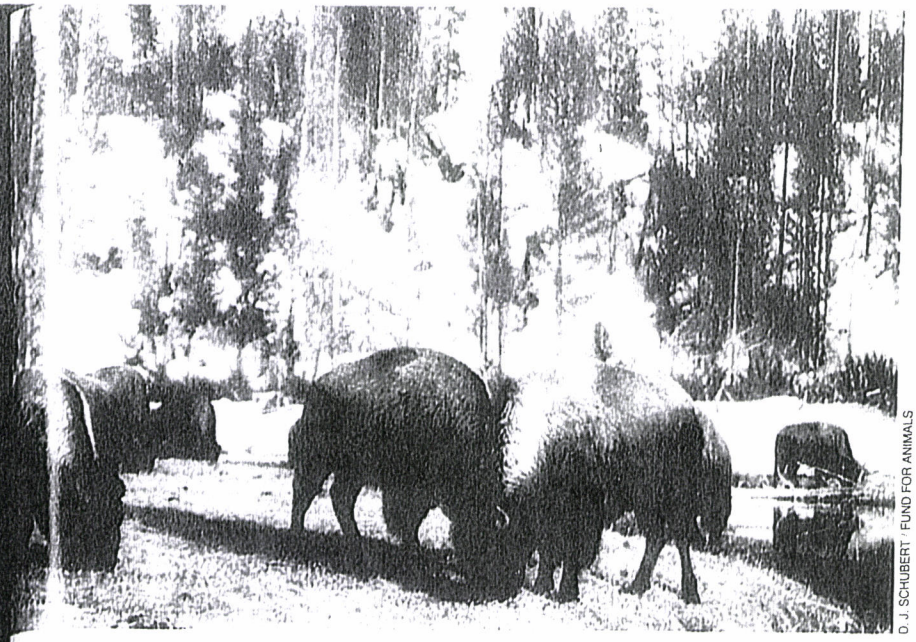
The park's buffalo indeed roam; ranchers fear spread of cattle disease.

hunters, many of whom have insisted on participating in the bison shoot, that obtaining a buffalo trophy is not worth the loss to their reputation. Says Don Bachman, a program assistant for the Greater Yellowstone Coalition, a group of 84 organizations that serves as a watchdog over the park: "This is not a hunt, it's a pest control action. You've got people walking up to an animal with the disposition of a Hereford cow and shooting it. Meanwhile, the hunter is surrounded by state game wardens who are protecting him from animal rights protesters. And all of this is on camera. It's not a pleasant sight, and it's something that has heaped ridicule on the state of Montana."

Nonsense, says W. D. Murray Jr., a Butte attorney who represents the 500-member Skyline Sportsmen's Association, a group that has pressed for full participation in any bison shoot. "What is the logical extension of that argument — because activists don't like killing of wild game, that we no longer hunt deer or elk, too? You'll wipe out the hunting industry if you follow that argument."

Despite its circus atmosphere, the controversy is seen by many as a microcosm of a much larger issue affecting the nation's public lands. As suburbs, shopping malls and vacation homes encroach on national recreation areas, park superintendents and federal land managers like Barbee are struggling to balance the ecological demands made by wildlife populations, recreational demands by sport hunters and a growing movement of animal rights advocates.

At Gettysburg National Military Park, for example, a study concluded that there were 20 times more deer than the Pennsylvania park could accommodate. At Olympic National Park in Washington, mountain goats often wander outside their intended ranges. And in Glacier National Park in Montana, officials struggle to nurture a



D. J. SCHUBERT / FUND FOR ANIMALS

nascent wolf population despite widespread opposition from ranchers. But Yellowstone National Park and its buffalo population remain the crucible within which the larger issue of wildlife management in parks will be decided.

Left to their own devices, the 2,500 to 3,000 buffalo that roam the 2.2 million-acre national park would have recolonized the Great Plains a long time ago. Every year about this time, they try to do just that. Gathering near Gardiner and West Yellowstone, Mont., the hulking animals begin moving out of the park, partly in search of easier foraging grounds — lower altitudes where the snowpack is not as deep — and partly in response to an instinctual urge to expand their range.

In the past, the National Park Service has been content to let Montana officials deal with the animals on their own, a position that has outraged state officials, who must answer to the 15,000 Montana livestock growers who fear the spread of disease by buffalo. The state has spent $30 million establishing itself as free of brucellosis, a designation that allows Montana livestock — 85 percent of which is exported — to be moved across state lines without quarantine restrictions and expensive health inspections. A reemergence of the disease could cost millions more for the state's livestock industry, which accounts for about 60 percent of its agricultural sales by some estimates.

Some state officials, including Cool, believe the Park Service should take full responsibility for the buffalo by either killing them before they leave the park or by trapping the animals and relocating them away from park boundaries. To pressure the Park Service into taking action, the state's Department of Livestock recently stunned Barbee and other Yellowstone officials by calling on the Department of Agriculture to declare an official quarantine of Yellowstone. Says Les Graham, executive director of the Department of Livestock: "The Park Service keeps telling us they are going to study the situation. Well, you can study something for so long and your scholarly interest runs out. We have to have something in place now to allow ranchers to protect their livestock."

The quarantine proposal came partly in response to a lawsuit filed by the Fund for Animals early last month. The suit asks that a federal judge grant a temporary restraining order halting any killing of bison, contending that the killing violates federal environmental laws. Graham and other livestock officials say a quarantine order will force the Park Service to take alternative action to keep the bison in the park if the judge prohibits shooting the animals. But environmental groups question how such a quarantine would work. "How are they going to do it?" asks the Yellowstone coalition's Bachman. "Are they going to build a fence around the park or station somebody with a .30-30 rifle every 100 feet around the entire boundary?"

GREG BECHLE / FUND FOR ANIMALS

3,200 hunters entered the buffalo lottery.

Opponents of the bison shoot, including the 200,000-member Fund for Animals, have argued that there is no instance, outside the laboratory, of brucellosis being transmitted from buffalo to Montana cattle. And the state, animal protection activists say, seems unconcerned with Yellowstone's 35,000 elk, which also carry the disease and freely range in and out of the park. Estimates of elk infestation range from 1 percent to 20 percent. "Do they want us to quarantine elk, too?" asks Yellowstone's Barbee. "Everyone seems to ignore that issue. Why? Because we're talking about an animal [elk] that is really highly prized from a sportsman's point of view."

But the bison are highly prized by hunters, too. Once numbering 60 million in herds throughout much of North America, the horned, shaggy-maned animals have become a symbol of the unspoiled frontier since their near extinction a century ago, when they were shot for sport and slaughtered by the millions for their hides and tongues. The buffalo population within Yellowstone grew from about 50 in 1900 to the current estimate of about 2,800.

To cull the three herds in the park, rangers once shot the excess bison. But the shootings were halted when the public expressed outrage. Montana enlisted private hunters in 1985 to shoot the bison as they left the park. Hunters interested in the shoot are called according to their place on a list of applicants chosen by lottery. More than 3,200 hunters asked to be placed in the lottery last winter.

Some environmental and hunting organizations have proposed that land be set aside outside the park — much as it is for elk — as a preserve where the buffalo can wander in the winter. But what happens when the buffalo wander out of the preserve? In recent years, they have trekked as far as 20 to 30 miles from the park boundaries, through the cattle country of Montana's Paradise Valley, before being shot or herded back into the park. Even without the threat of brucellosis, park officials concede, they must be stopped.

Says Barbee: "Buffalo roam. They always have. Even if we removed brucellosis tomorrow, we'd still have a problem. I don't think we can allow them to recolonize the Great Plains."

— Mark Lawrence Ragan

Tyson is nobody's chump anymore: 'I'm cried out'

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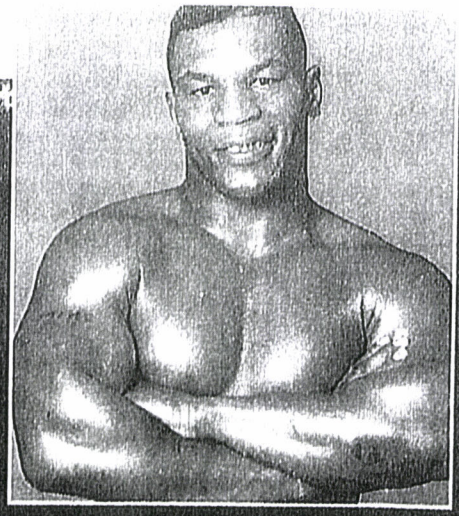

THEY'RE PREGGERS!

Melanie's ecstatic and Don says he got 'completely stupid' when he heard the news: 'I've been mush-faced ever since.' They're thinking April wedding– and the *Working Girl* may deliver an Oscar by then. Here's to H'wood's happiest couple.

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MONTANA HUNTERS, CONFRONTING TARGETS BIG, SLOW AND UNWARY, TAKE AIM AT YELLOWSTONE'S BISON

The great bison stood alone under Montana's vast blue sky, slowly swinging his massive head, knocking away a snowy crust to get at the grass beneath. His ancestors had roamed these plains for hundreds of centuries, but time was almost up for this old bull. He had made the fatal mistake of wandering north out of Yellowstone National Park, and now he was face-to-face with Jay Morasko, 31, an insurance agent from Glendive, Mont. Morasko climbed out of his pickup by the roadside and walked to within 20 yards of his undisturbed quarry. The hunter shouldered his 7-mm Weatherby rifle, drew a bead and tried to calm his fluttering stomach. "Damn, I'm nervous," he muttered.

Sublimely indifferent, the bison kept grazing.

Then Morasko fired, and the 2,300-lb. animal heaved onto its side, kicking up snow. Rushing to examine his kill, Morasko found the bull stunned but alive. Jamming his rifle barrel into the base of the skull, Morasko fired again. The bison jerked, and his eyes still rolled wildly. Hastily, Morasko sent another bullet into the animal's brain, and the baffled eyes finally glazed over. "Oh my God," gasped Morasko. "This is the most exciting hunt of my life! This is real special, a wild animal! They don't get any wilder than this! Get the camera, guys!"

Welcome to the Great American Buffalo Hunt. Before the pioneers pushed West, 200 million bison roamed the plains. Now the 2,800 Yellowstone bison make up the largest free-ranging herd left in the U.S. Federal law protects the animals inside the 2.2 million acre park. But this winter, with Yellowstone's grazing lands depleted by drought and fire and covered with heavy snows, record numbers of bison have wandered out of the park, tearing up lawns and shrubbery in neighboring towns. In the past, shooing them back home has proved impossible, so this year the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks chose 250 hunters by lottery and offered them the privilege—for a $200 fee—of blasting away at a bison. Morasko was one of the lucky ones.

"I think it's reprehensible," says Noel Larrivee, a Missoula, Mont., attorney who represents the New York–based Fund for Animals. "It's not a hunt in any sense of the word. The bison are acclimated to seeing people. It's not like stalking a game animal. They don't run or anything." Montana hunting guide Edwin L. Johnson is inclined to agree. "It's a lot like shooting dairy cattle," he says.

In Gardiner, a town of 500 just north of Yellowstone, opinion is divided. "It's great to live where you can see elk and bison walking down Main Street," says Mike McNulty, who runs the Best Western Motel with his wife, Brena. Others are less enchanted with the visitors. "Last week I had 60 of them on my goddamn lawn," fumes Karl Reinhardt, 67, owner of the Flamingo Motor Lodge. "They knocked over my sprinkler heads. I have reflectors on [the heads] so I don't hit them with the mower, and the buffalo stepped right on them, reflectors and all."

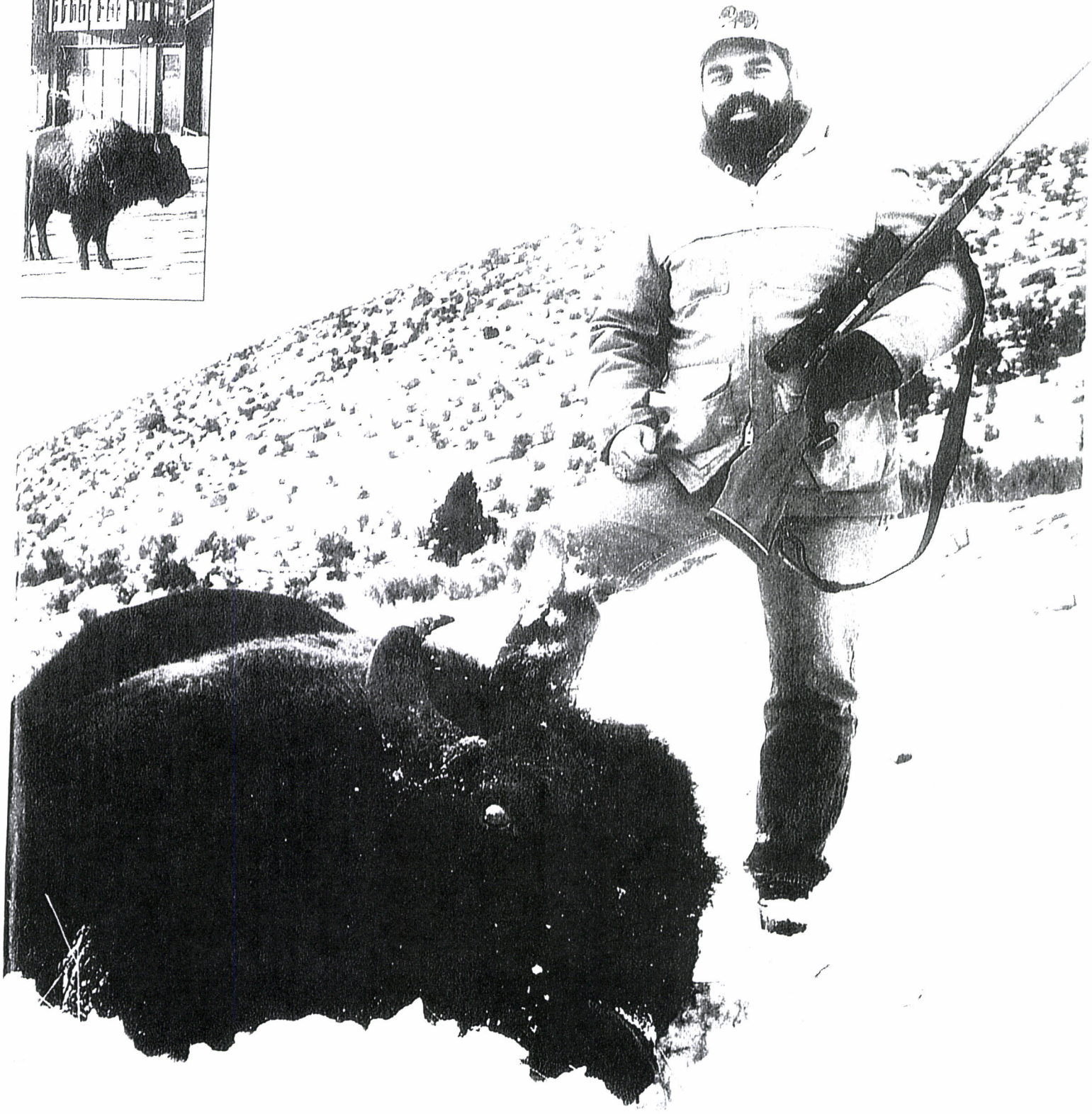
As if on cue, six massive bulls wander up to munch on Reinhardt's grass, right under the nose of the giant neon pink flamingo. Reinhardt fires his .22 pistol into the air and flaps his arms wildly. "Go on, get outta here, get off my lawn!" he bellows. The bison keep on munching. After eating their fill, they silently lumber on, leaving Reinhardt trembling with rage. "Hell, I'm not afraid of them," he says. "I'd shoot them, but my damn wife, Millie, won't cook buffalo meat."

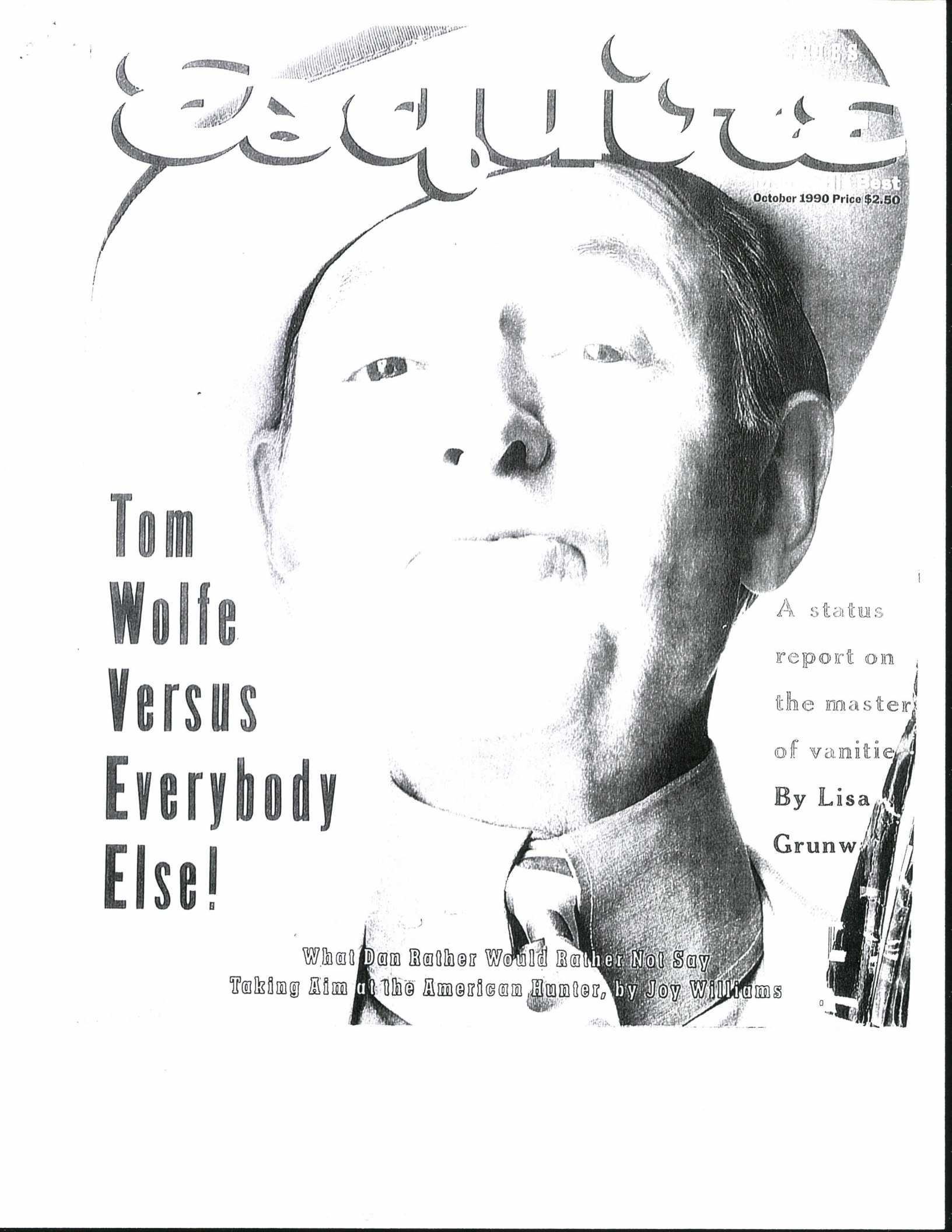
Outside of town it takes Morasko and several friends three hours to skin and gut his bison. Then, using a hired earth-moving machine, they hoist the carcass onto a pickup. Morasko plans to share his ton of meat with friends back in Glendive, 400 miles away. And he'll have a reminder of his moment of glory. "That head," he says, surveying the huge shaggy trophy, "will look great in my office."

—David Grogan, and Bill Shaw in Gardiner

Bison outnumber pedestrians these days on Main Street in Gardiner, Mont., above. The night before he bagged his bull, says rifleman Jay Morasko, "I tossed and turned, I was so excited."

Photographs by Kevin Horan

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WHY THE AMERICAN HUNTER IS BLOODTHIRSTY, PIGGISH, AND GROSSLY INCOMPETENT

The Killing Game

BY JOY WILLIAMS

Death and suffering are a big part of hunting. A big part. Not that you'd ever know it by hearing hunters talk. They tend to downplay the killing part. To kill is to put to death, extinguish, nullify, cancel, destroy. But from the hunter's point of view, it's just a tiny part of the experience. *The kill is the least important part of the hunt*... they often say, or, *Killing involves only a split second of the innumerable hours we spend surrounded by and observing nature*.... For the animal, of course, the killing part is of considerably more importance. Jose Ortega y Gasset, in *Meditations on Hunting,* wrote, *Death is a sign of reality in hunting. One does not hunt in order to kill; on the contrary, one kills in order to have hunted.* This is the sort of intellectual blather that the "thinking" hunter holds dear. The conservation editor of *Field & Stream,* George Reiger, recently paraphrased this sentiment by saying, *We kill to hunt, and not the other way around,* thereby making it truly fatuous. A hunter in West Virginia, one Mr. Bill Neal, blazed through this philosophical fog by explaining why he blows the toes off tree raccoons so that they will fall

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WILLIAM DUKE

down and be torn apart by his dogs. *That's the best part of it. It's not any fun just shooting them.* ▫ Instead of monitoring animals—many animals in managed areas are tagged, tattooed, and wear radio transmitters—wildlife managers should start hanging telemetry gear around hunters' necks to study their attitudes and listen to their conversations. It would be grisly listening, but it would tune out for good the *suffering as sacrament* and *spiritual experience* blather that some hunting apologists employ. *The unease with which the good hunter inflicts death is an unease not merely with his conscience but with affirming his animality in the midst of his struggles toward humanity and clarity,* Holmes Rolston III drones on in his book *Environmental Ethics.* ▪ There is a formula to this in literature—someone the protagonist loves has just died, so he goes out and kills an animal. This makes him feel better. But it's kind of a sad feeling-better. He gets to relate to Death and Nature in this way. Somewhat. But not really. Death is still a mystery. Well, it's hard to explain. It's sort of a semireligious thing.... Killing and affirming, affirming and killing, it's just the cross the "good" hunter must bear. The bad hunter just has to deal with postkill letdown. ▪ Many are the hunter's specious arguments. Less semireligious but a long-standing favorite with them is the vegetarian approach (you eat meat, don't you?). If you say no, they feel they've got you—you're just a vegetarian attempting to impose your weird views on others. I you say yes, they accuse you of being hypocritical, of allowing your genial A&I butcher to stand between you and reality The fact is, the chief attraction of hunting is the pursuit and murder of animals—the meat-eating aspect of it is trivial. If the hunter chooses to be *ethical* about it he might cook his kill, but the meat of most animals is discarded. Dead bear can even be dangerous! A bear's heavy hide must be skinned at once to prevent meat spoilage With effort, a hunter can make okay chili *something to keep in mind,* a sports rag says, *if you take two skinny spring bears.*

As for subsistence hunting, please... Granted that there might be one "good" hunter out there who conducts the kill as spiritual exercise and two others who are atavistic enough to want to supplement their Chicken McNuggets with venison most hunters hunt for the hell of it.

For hunters, hunting is fun. Recreation is play. Hunting is recreation. Hunters kill for play, for entertainment. They kill for the thrill of it, to make an animal "theirs." (The Gandhian doctrine of nonpossession has never been a big hit with hunters.) The animal becomes the property of the hunter by its death. Alive, the beast belongs only to itself. This is unacceptable to the hunter. *He's yours.... He's mine.... I decided to... I decided not to.... I debated shooting it, then I decided to let it live....* Hunters like beautiful creatures. A "beautiful" deer, elk, bear, cougar, bighorn sheep. A "beautiful" goose or mallard. Of course, they don't stay "beautiful" for long, particularly the birds. Many birds become rags in the air, shredded, blown to bits. *Keep shooting till they drop!* Hunters get a thrill out of seeing a plummeting bird, out of seeing it crumple and fall. *The big pheasant folded in classic fashion.* They get a kick out of "collecting" new species. *Why not add a unique harlequin duck to your collec-*

The chief attraction of hunting is the pursuit and murder of animals.

Joy Williams's *work frequently appears in Esquire.*

Why I Hunt

tion? Swan hunting is satisfying. *I let loose a three-inch magnum. The large bird only flinched with my first shot and began to gain altitude. I frantically ejected the round, chambered another, and dropped the swan with my second shot. After retrieving the bird I was amazed by its size. The swan's six-foot wingspan, huge body, and long neck made it an impressive trophy.* Hunters like big animals, trophy animals. A "trophy" usually means that the hunter doesn't deign to eat it. Maybe he skins it or mounts it. Maybe he takes a picture. *We took pictures, we took pictures.* Maybe he just looks at it for a while. The disposition of the "experience" is up to the hunter. He's entitled to do whatever he wishes with the damn thing. It's dead.

Hunters like categories they can tailor to their needs. There are the "good" animals—deer, elk, bear, moose—which are allowed to exist for the hunter's pleasure. Then there are the "bad" animals, the vermin, varmints, and "nuisance" animals, the rabbits and raccoons and coyotes and beavers and badgers, which are disencouraged to exist. The hunter can have fun killing them, but the pleasure is diminished because the animals aren't "magnificent."

Then there are the predators. These can be killed any time, because, hunters argue, they're predators, for godssakes.

Many people in South Dakota want to exterminate the red fox because it preys upon some of the ducks and pheasant they want to hunt and kill each year. They found that after they killed the wolves and coyotes, they had more foxes than they wanted. The ring-necked pheasant is South Dakota's state bird. No matter that it was imported from Asia specifically to be "harvested" for sport, it's South Dakota's state bird and they're proud of it. A group called Pheasants Unlimited gave some tips on how to hunt foxes. *Place a small amount of larvicide* [a grain fumigant] *on a rag and chuck it down the hole.... The first pup generally comes out in fifteen minutes.... Use a .22 to dispatch him.... Remove each pup shot from the hole. Following gassing, set traps for the old fox who will return later in the evening....* Poisoning, shooting, trapping—they make up a sort of sportsman's triathlon.

IN THE HUNTING MAGAZINES, hunters freely admit the pleasure of killing to one another. *Undeniable pleasure radiated from her smile. The excitement of shooting the bear had Barb talking a mile a minute.* But in public, most hunters are becoming a little wary about raving on as to how much fun it is to kill things. Hunters have a tendency to call large animals by cute names—"bruins" and "muleys," "berry-

Hunters kill for play, for the thrill of it.

fed blackies" and "handsome cusses" and "big guys," thereby implying a balanced jolly game of mutual satisfaction between the hunter and the hunted—*Bam, bam, bam, I get to shoot you and you get to be dead.* More often, though, when dealing with the nonhunting public, a drier, businesslike tone is employed. Animals become a "resource" that must be "utilized." Hunting becomes "a legitimate use of the resource." Animals become a product like wool or lumber or a crop like fruit or corn that must be "collected" or "taken" or "harvested." Hunters love to use the word *legitimate.* (Oddly, Tolstoy referred to hunting as "evil legitimized.") *A legitimate use, a legitimate form of recreation, a legitimate escape, a legitimate pursuit.* It's a word they trust will slam the door on discourse. Hunters are increasingly relying upon their spokesmen and supporters, state and federal game managers and wildlife officials, to employ the drone of a solemn bureaucratic language and toss around a lot of questionable statistics to assure the nonhunting public (93 percent!) that there's nothing to worry about. The pogrom is under control. The mass murder and manipulation of wild animals is just another business. Hunters are a tiny minority, and it's crucial to them that the millions of people who don't hunt not be awakened from their long sleep and become antihunting. Nonhunters are okay. Dweeby, probably, but okay. A hunter *can respect the rights* of a nonhunter. It's the "antis" he despises, those *misguided, emotional, not-in-possession-of-the-facts, uninformed zealots who don't understand nature.... Those dime-store ecologists cloaked in ignorance and spurred by emotion.... Those doggy-woggy types, who under the guise of being environmentalists and conservationists are working to deprive him of his precious right to kill.* (Sometimes it's just a *right*; sometimes it's a *God-given* right.) Antis can be scorned, but nonhunters must be pacified, and this is where the number crunching of wildlife biologists and the scripts of *professional resource managers* come in. Leave it to the professionals. They know what numbers are the good numbers. Utah determined that there were six hundred sandhill cranes in the state, so permits were issued to shoot one hundred of them. Don't want to have too many sandhill cranes. California wildlife officials reported "sufficient numbers" of mountain lions to "justify" renewed hunting, even though it doesn't take a rocket scientist to know the animal is extremely rare. (It's always a dark day for hunters when an animal is adjudged *rare.* How can its numbers be "controlled" through hunting if it scarcely exists?...) A recent citizens' referendum prohibits the hunting of the mountain lion in perpetuity—not that the lions aren't killed anyway, in California and all over the West, hundreds of them annually by the government as part of the scandalous Animal Damage Control Program. Oh, to be the lucky hunter who gets to be an official government hunter and can legitimately kill animals his buddies aren't supposed to! Montana officials, led by K. L. Cool, that state's wildlife director, have definite ideas on the number of buffalo they feel can be tolerated. Zero is the number. Yellowstone National Park is the only place in America where bison exist, having been annihilated everywhere else. In the winter of 1988, nearly six hundred buffalo wandered out of the north boundary of the park and into Montana where they were immediately shot at point-blank range by lottery-winning hunters. It was easy. And it was obvious from a video taken on one of the blow-away-the-bison days that the hunters had a heck of a good time. The buffalo, Cool says, threaten ranchers' livelihood by doing damage to property—by which he means, I guess, that they eat the grass. Montana wants zero buffalo; it also wants zero wolves.

Large predators—including grizzlies, cougars, and wolves—are often the most "beautiful," the smartest and wildest animals of all. The gray wolf is both a supreme predator and an endangered species, and since the Supreme Court recently affirmed that ranchers have no constitutional right to kill endangered predators—apparently some God-given rights are not constitu-

tional ones—this makes the wolf a more or less lucky dog. But not for long. A small population of gray wolves has recently established itself in northwestern Montana, primarily in Glacier National Park, and there is a plan, long a dream of conservationists, to "reintroduce" the wolf to Yellowstone. But to please ranchers and hunters, part of the plan would involve immediately removing the wolf from the endangered-species list. Beyond the park's boundaries, he could be hunted as a "game animal" or exterminated as a "pest." (Hunters kill to hunt, remember, except when they're hunting to kill.) The area of Yellowstone where the wolf would be restored is the same mountain and high-plateau country that is abandoned in winter by most animals, including the aforementioned luckless bison. Part of the plan, too, is compensation to ranchers if any of their far-ranging livestock is killed by a wolf. It's a real industry out there, apparently, killing and controlling and getting compensated for losing something under the Big Sky.

Wolves gotta eat—a fact that disturbs hunters. Jack Atcheson, an outfitter in Butte, said, *Some wolves are fine if there is control. But there never will be control. The wolf-control plan provided by the Fish and Wildlife Service speaks only of protecting domestic livestock. There is no plan to protect wildlife.... There are no surplus deer or elk in Montana.... Their numbers are carefully managed. With uncontrolled wolf populations, a lot of people will have to give up hunting just to feed wolves. Will you give up your elk permit for a wolf?*

It won't be long before hunters start demanding compensation for animals they aren't able to shoot.

Hunters like to call large animals by cute names—such as "big guy."

HUNTERS BELIEVE THAT wild animals exist only to satisfy their wish to kill them. And it's so easy to kill them! The weaponry available is staggering, and the equipment and gear limitless. *The demand for big boomers has never been greater than right now, Outdoor Life* crows, *and the makers of rifles and cartridges are responding to the craze with a variety of light artillery that is virtually unprecedented in the history of sporting arms....* Hunters use grossly overpowered shotguns and rifles and compound bows. They rely on four-wheel-drive vehicles and three-wheel ATVs and airplanes.... *He was interesting, the only moving, living creature on that limitless white expanse. I slipped a cartridge into the barrel of my rifle and threw the safety off....* They use snowmobiles to run down elk, and dogs to run down and tree cougars. It's easy to shoot an animal out of a tree. It's virtually impossible to miss a moose, a conspicuous and placid animal of steady habits.... *I took a deep breath and pulled the trigger. The bull dropped. I looked at my watch: 8:22. The big guy was early. Mike started whooping and hollering and I joined him. I never realized how big a moose was until this one was on the ground. We took pictures....* Hunters shoot animals when they're resting.... *Mike selected a deer, settled down to a steady rest, and fired. The buck was his when he squeezed the trigger. John decided to take the other buck, which had jumped up to its feet. The deer hadn't seen us and was confused by the shot echoing about in the valley. John took careful aim, fired, and took the buck. The hunt was over....* And they shoot them when they're eating.... *The bruin ambled up the stream, checking gravel bars and backwaters for fish. Finally he plopped down on the bank to eat. Quickly, I tiptoed into range....* They use decoys and calls.... *The six point gave me a cold-eyed glare from ninety steps away. I hit him with a 130-grain Sierra boattail handload. The bull went down hard. Our hunt was over....* They use sex lures.... *The big buck raised its nose to the air, curled back its lips, and tested the scent of the doe's urine. I held my breath, fought back the shivers, and jerked off a shot. The 180-grain spire-point bullet caught the buck high on the back behind the shoulder and put it down. It didn't get up....* They use walkie-talkies, binoculars, scopes.... *With my 308 Browning BLR, I steadied the 9X cross hairs on the front of the bear's massive shoulders and squeezed. The bear cartwheeled backward for fifty yards.... The second Federal Premium 165-grain bullet found its mark. Another shot anchored the bear for good....* They bait deer with corn. They spread popcorn on golf courses for Canada geese and they douse meat baits with fry grease and honey for bears.... *Make the baiting site redolent of inner-city doughnut shops.* They use blinds and tree stands and mobile stands. They go out in groups, in gangs, and employ "pushes" and "drives." So many methods are effective. So few rules apply. It's fun!... *We kept on repelling the swarms of birds as they came in looking for shelter from that big ocean wind, emptying our shell belts....* A species can, in the vernacular, be *pressured by hunting* (which means that killing them has decimated them), but that just increases the fun, the *challenge.* There is practically no criticism of conduct within the ranks.... *It's mostly a matter of opinion and how hunters have been brought up to hunt....* Although a recent editorial in *Ducks Unlimited* magazine did venture to primly suggest that one should *not fall victim to greed-induced stress through piggish competition with others.*

But hunters are piggy. They just can't seem to help it. They're overequipped... insatiable, malevolent, and vain. They maim and mutilate and despoil. And for the most part, they're inept. Grossly inept.

Camouflaged toilet paper is a must for the modern hunter, along with his Bronco and his beer. Too many hunters taking a dump in the woods with their roll of Charmin beside them were mistaken for white-tailed deer and shot. Hunters get excited. They'll shoot anything—the pallid ass of another sportsman or even themselves. A Long Island man died last year when his shotgun went off as he clubbed a wounded deer with the butt. Hunters get mad. They get restless and want to fire! They want to use those assault rifles and see foamy blood on the ferns. Wounded animals can travel for miles in fear and pain before they collapse. Countless gut-shot deer—*if you hear a sudden, squashy thump, the animal has probably been hit in the abdomen*—are "lost" each year. "Poor-

ly placed shots" are frequent, and injured animals are seldom tracked, because most hunters never learned how to track. The majority of hunters will shoot at anything with four legs during deer season and anything with wings during duck season. Hunters try to nail running animals and distant birds. They become so overeager, so *aroused,* that they misidentify and misjudge, spraying their "game" with shots aware that, in their words, *crippling is a by-product of the sport,* making archers pretty sloppy for elitists. The broadhead arrow is a very inefficient killing tool. Bow hunters are trying to deal with this problem with the suggestion that they use poison pods. These poisoned arrows are illegal in all states except Mississippi (*Ah'm gonna get ma deer even if ah just nick the little bastard*), but they're widely used anyway. (Duck hunters practice tough love.) The fact is, far from being a "romantic aesthete," the waterfowler is the most avaricious of all hunters... *That's when Scott suggested the friendly wager on who would take the most birds*... and the most resistant to minimum ecological decency. Millions of birds that managed to elude shotgun blasts were dying each year from ingesting the lead shot that rained down in

Soon hunters will want compensation for animals they didn't shoot.

but failing to bring it down.

The fact is, hunters' lack of skill is a big, big problem. And nowhere is the problem worse than in the new glamour recreation—bow hunting. These guys are elitists. They doll themselves up in camouflage, paint their faces black, and climb up into tree stands from which they attempt the penetration of deer, elk, and turkeys with modern, multiblade, broadhead arrows shot from sophisticated, easy-to-draw compound bows. This "primitive" way of hunting appeals to many, and even the nonhunter may feel that it's a "fairer" method, requiring more strength and skill, but bow hunting is the cruelest, most wanton form of wildlife disposal of all. Studies conducted by state fish and wildlife departments repeatedly show that bow hunters wound and fail to retrieve as many animals as they kill. An animal that flees, wounded by an arrow, will most assuredly die of the wound, but it will be days before he does. Even with a "good" hit, the time elapsed between the strike and death is exceedingly long. *The rule of thumb has long been that we should wait thirty to forty-five minutes on heart and lung hits, an hour or more on a suspected liver hit, eight to twelve hours on paunch hits, and that we should follow immediately on hindquarter and other muscle-only hits, to keep the wound open and bleeding,* is the advice in the magazine *Fins and Feathers.* What the hunter does as he hangs around waiting for his animal to finish with its terrified running and dying hasn't been studied—maybe he puts on more makeup, maybe he has a highball.

Wildlife agencies promote and encourage bow hunting by permitting earlier and longer seasons, even though they are well aware that, in their words, *crippling is a by-product of the sport,* making archers pretty sloppy for elitists. The broadhead arrow is a very inefficient killing tool. Bow hunters are trying to deal with this problem with the suggestion that they use poison pods. These poisoned arrows are illegal in all states except Mississippi (*Ah'm gonna get ma deer even if ah just nick the little bastard*), but they're widely used anyway. You wouldn't want that deer to suffer, would you?

THE MYSTIQUE OF THE efficacy and decency of the bow hunter is as much an illusion as the perception that a waterfowler is a refined and thoughtful fellow, a *romantic aesthete,* as Vance Bourjaily put it, equipped with his faithful labs and a love for solitude and wild places. More sentimental drivel has been written about bird shooting than any other type of hunting. It's a soul-wrenching pursuit, apparently, the execution of birds in flight. Ducks Unlimited—an organization that has managed to put a spin on the word *conservation* for years—works hard to project the idea that duck hunters are blue bloods and that duck stamps with their pretty pictures are responsible for saving all the saved puddles in North America. *Sportsman's conservation* is a contradiction in terms (We protect things now so that we can kill them later) and is broadly interpreted (Don't kill them all, just kill most of them). A hunter is a conservationist in the same way a farmer or a rancher is: He's not. Like the rancher who kills everything that's not stock on his (and the public's) land, and the farmer who scorns wildlife because "they don't pay their freight," the hunter uses nature by destroying its parts, mastering it by simplifying it through death.

George ("We kill to hunt and not the other way around") Reiger, the conservationist-hunter's spokesman (he's the best they've got, apparently), said that the "dedicated" waterfowler will shoot other game "of course," but *we do so much in the same spirit of the lyrics, that when we're not near the girl we love, we love the girl we're near.* the wetlands. Year after year, birds perished from feeding on spent lead, but hunters were "reluctant" to switch to steel. They worried that it would impair their shooting, and ammunition manufacturers said a changeover would be "expensive." State and federal officials had to weigh the poisoning against these considerations. It took forever, this weighing, but now steel-shot loads are required almost everywhere, having been judged "more than adequate" to bring down the birds. This is not to say, of course, that most duck hunters use steel shot almost everywhere. They're traditionalists and don't care for all the new, pesky rules. Oh, for the golden age of waterfowling, when a man could measure a good day's shooting by the pickup load. But those days are gone. Fall is a melancholy time, all right.

Spectacular abuses occur wherever geese congregate, Shooting Sportsman notes quietly, something that the more cultivated Ducks Unlimited would hesitate to admit. Waterfowl populations are plummeting and waterfowl hunters are out of control. "Supervised" hunts are hardly distinguished from unsupervised ones. A biologist with the Department of the Interior who observed a hunt at Sand Lake in South Dakota said, *Hunters repeatedly shot over the line at incoming flights where there was no possible chance of retrieving. Time and time again I was shocked at the behavior of hunters. I heard them laugh at the plight of dazed cripples that stumbled about. I saw them striking the heads of retrieved cripples against fence posts.* In the South, wood ducks return to their roosts after sunset when shooting hours are closed. Hunters find this an excellent time to shoot them.

A hunter is a conservationist the way a farmer or rancher is: He's not.

Dennis Anderson, an outdoors writer, said, *Roost shooters just fire at the birds as fast as they can, trying to drop as many as they can. Then they grab what birds they can find. The birds they can't find in the dark, they leave behind.*

Carnage and waste are the rules in bird hunting, even during legal seasons and open hours. Thousands of wounded ducks and geese are not retrieved, left to rot in the marshes and fields.... *When I asked Wanda where hers had fallen, she wasn't sure.* Cripples, and there are many cripples made in this pastime, are still able to run and hide, eluding the hunter even if he's willing to spend time searching for them, which he usually isn't.... *It's one thing to run down a cripple in a picked bean field or a pasture, and quite another to watch a wing-tipped bird drop into a huge block of switch grass.* Oh nasty, nasty switch grass. A downed bird becomes invisible on the ground and is practically unfindable without a good dog, and few "waterfowlers" have them these days. They're hard to train—usually a professional has to do it—and most hunters can't be bothered. Birds are easy to tumble.... *Canada geese—blues and snows—can all take a good amount of shot. Brant are easily called and decoyed and come down easily. Ruffed grouse are hard to hit but easy to kill. Sharptails are harder to kill but easier to hit....* It's just a nuisance to recover them. But it's fun, fun, fun swatting them down.... *There's distinct pleasure in watching a flock work to a good friend's gun....*

Teal, the smallest of common ducks, are really easy to kill. Hunters in the South used to *practice* on teal in September, prior to the "serious" waterfowl season. But the birds were so diminutive and the limit so low (four a day) that many hunters felt it hardly worth going out and getting bit by mosquitoes to kill them. Enough did, however, brave the bugs and manage to "harvest" 165,000 of the little migrating birds in Louisiana in 1987 alone. *Shooting is usually best on opening day. By the second day you can sometimes detect a decline in local teal numbers. Areas may deteriorate to virtually no action by the third day....* The area *deteriorates*. When a flock is wiped out, the skies are empty. *No action.*

Teal declined more sharply than any duck species except mallard last year; this baffles hunters. Hunters and their procurers—wildlife agencies—will *never* admit that hunting is responsible for the decimation of a species. John Turner, head of the Federal Fish and Wildlife Service, delivers the familiar and litanic line. Hunting is not the problem. *Pollution* is the problem. *Pesticides, urbanization, deforestation, hazardous waste,* and *wetlands destruction* is the problem. And drought! There's been a big drought! Antis should devote their energies to solving these problems if they care about wildlife, and leave the hunters alone. While the Fish and Wildlife Service is busily conducting experiments in cause and effect, like releasing mallard ducklings on a wetland sprayed with the insecticide ethyl parathion (they died—it was known they would, but you can never have enough studies that show guns aren't a duck's only problem), hunters are killing some two hundred million birds and animals each year. But these deaths are incidental to the problem, according to Turner. A factor, perhaps, but a *minor* one. Ducks Unlimited says the problem isn't hunting, it's *low recruitment* on the part of the birds. To the hunter, *birth* in the animal kingdom is *recruitment*. They wouldn't want to use an emotional, sentimental word like *birth*. The black duck, a very "popular" duck in the Northeast, so "popular," in fact, that game agencies felt that hunters couldn't be asked to refrain from shooting it, is scarce and getting scarcer. Nevertheless, it's still being hunted. *A number of studies are currently under way in an attempt to discover why black ducks are disappearing, Sports Afield* reports. Black ducks are disappearing because they've been shot out, their elimination being a dreadful example of game management, and managers who are loath to "displease" hunters. The skies—*flyways*—of America have been divided into four administrative regions, and the states, advised by a federal government coordinator, have to agree on policies.

There's always a lot of squabbling that goes on in flyway—meetings—lots of complaints about short-stopping, for example. Short-stopping is the deliberate holding of birds in a state, often by feeding them in wildlife refuges, so that their southern migration is slowed or stopped. Hunters in the North get to kill more than hunters in the South. This isn't fair. Hunters demand equity in opportunities to kill.

Wildlife managers hate closing the season on anything. Closing the season on a species would indicate a certain amount of *mis*management and misjudgment at the very least—a certain reliance on overly optimistic winter counts, a certain overappeasement of hunters who would be "upset" if they couldn't kill their favorite thing. And worse, closing a season would be considered victory for the antis. Bird-hunting "rules" are very complicated, but they all encourage killing. There are shortened seasons and split seasons and special seasons for "underutilized" birds. (Teal were very recently considered "underutilized.") The limit on coots is fifteen a day—shooting them, it's easy! They don't fly high—giving the hunter something to do while he waits in the blind. Some species are "protected," but bear in mind that hunters begin blasting away one half hour before sunrise and that most hunters can't identify a bird in the air even in broad daylight. Some of them can't identify birds in hand either, and even if they can (*#%*! I got me a canvasback, that duck's frigging protected...*), they are likely to bury unpopular or "trash" ducks so that they can continue to hunt the ones they "love."

Game "professionals," in thrall to hunters' "needs," will not stop managing bird populations until they've doled out the final duck (*I didn't get my limit but I bagged the last one, by golly...*). The Fish and Wildlife Service services legal hunters as busily as any madam, but it is powerless in tempering the lusts of the illegal ones. Illegal kill is a monumental problem in the not-so-wonderful world of waterfowl. Excesses

Sport hunting is immoral. Hunters are persecutors to be prosecuted.

have always pervaded the "sport," and bird shooters have historically been the slobs and profligates of hunting. *Doing away with hunting would do away with a vital cultural and historical aspect of American life,* John Turner claims. So, do away with it. Do away with those who have already done away with so much. Do away with them before the birds they have pursued so relentlessly and for so long drop into extinction, sink, in the poet Wallace Stevens's words, "downward to darkness on extended wings."

"Quality" hunting is as rare as the Florida panther. What you've got is a bunch of guys driving over the plains, up the mountains, and through the woods with their stupid tag that cost them a couple of bucks and immense coolers full of beer and body parts. There's a price tag on the right to destroy living creatures for play, but it's not much. *A big-game hunting license is the greatest deal going since the Homestead Act,* Ted Kerasote writes in *Sports Afield. In many states residents can hunt big game for more than a month for about $20.* It's cheaper than taking the little woman out to lunch. It's cheap all right, and it's because killing animals is considered *recreation* and is underwritten by state and federal funds. In Florida, state moneys are routinely spent on "youth hunts," in which kids are guided to shoot deer from stands in wildlife-management areas. The organizers of these events say that these staged hunts *help youth to understand man's role in the ecosystem.* (Drop a doe and take your place in the ecological community, son....)

Hunters claim (they don't actually believe it but they've learned to say it) that they're doing nonhunters a favor—for if they didn't *use* wild animals, wild animals would be useless. They believe that they're just *helping Mother Nature control populations (you wouldn't want those deer to die of starvation, would you?...).* They claim that their tiny fees provide *all* Americans with wild lands and animals. (People who don't hunt get to enjoy animals all year round while hunters get to enjoy them only during hunting season....) Ducks Unlimited feels that it, in particular, is a selfless provider and environmental champion. Although members spend most of their money lobbying for hunters and raising ducks in pens to release later over shooting fields, they do save some wetlands, mostly by persuading farmers not to fill them in. *See that little pothole there the ducks like? Well, I'm gonna plant more soybeans there if you don't pay me not to....* Hunters claim many nonsensical things, but the most nonsensical of all is that they *pay their own way.* They do not pay their own way. They *do* pay into a perverse wildlife-management system that manipulates "stocks" and "herds" and "flocks" for hunters' killing pleasure, but these fees in no way cover the cost of highly questionable ecological practices. For some spare change...*the greatest deal going...* hunters can hunt on public lands—national parks, state forests—preserves for hunters!—which the nonhunting and antihunting public pay for. (Access to private lands is becoming increasingly difficult for them, as experience has taught people that hunters are obnoxious.) Hunters kill on millions of acres of land all over America that is maintained with general taxpayer revenue, but the most shocking, really twisted subsidization takes place on national wildlife refuges. Nowhere is the arrogance and the insidiousness of this small, aggressive minority more clearly demonstrated. Nowhere is the murder of animals, the manipulation of language, and the distortion of public intent more flagrant. The public perceives national wildlife refuges as safe havens, as sanctuaries for animals. And why wouldn't they? The word *refuge* of course *means* shelter from danger and distress. But the dweeby nonhunting public—they tend to be so literal. The word has been reinterpreted by management over time and now hunters are invited into more than half of the country's more than 440 wildlife "sanctuaries" each year to bang them up and kill more than half a million animals. This is called *wildlife-oriented recreation.* Hunters think of this as being no less than their due, claiming that refuge lands were purchased with duck stamps (*...our duck stamps paid for it...our duck stamps paid for it...*). Hunters equate those stupid stamps with the mystic, multiplying power of the Lord's loaves and fishes, but of ninety million acres in the Wildlife Refuge System, only three million were bought with hunting-stamp revenue. Most wildlife "restoration" programs in the states are translated into clearing land to increase deer habitats (so that too many deer will require hunting...you wouldn't want them to die of starvation, would you?) and trapping animals for restocking and study (so hunters can shoot more of them). Fish and game agencies hustle hunting—instead of conserving wildlife, they're killing it. It's time for them to get in the business of protecting and preserving wildlife and creating balanced ecological systems instead of pimping for hunters who want their deer/duck/pheasant/turkey—animals stocked to be shot.

Hunters' self-serving arguments and lies are becoming more preposterous as nonhunters awake from their long, albeit troubled, sleep. Sport hunting is immoral; it should be made illegal. Hunters are persecutors of nature who should be prosecuted. They wield a disruptive power out of all proportion to their numbers, and pandering to their interests—the special interests of a group that just wants to kill things—is mad. It's preposterous that every year less than 7 percent of the population turns the skies into shooting galleries and the woods and fields into abattoirs. It's time to stop actively supporting and passively allowing hunting, and time to stigmatize it. It's time to stop being conned and cowed by hunters, time to stop pampering and coddling them, time to get them off the government's duck-and-deer dole, time to stop thinking of wild animals as "resources" and "game," and start thinking of them as sentient beings that deserve our wonder and respect, time to stop allowing hunting to be creditable by calling it "sport" and "recreation." Hunters make wildlife *dead, dead, dead.* It's time to wake up to this indisputable fact. As for the hunters, it's long past check-out time. ◘

Backpacker Magazine

GEOSPHERE

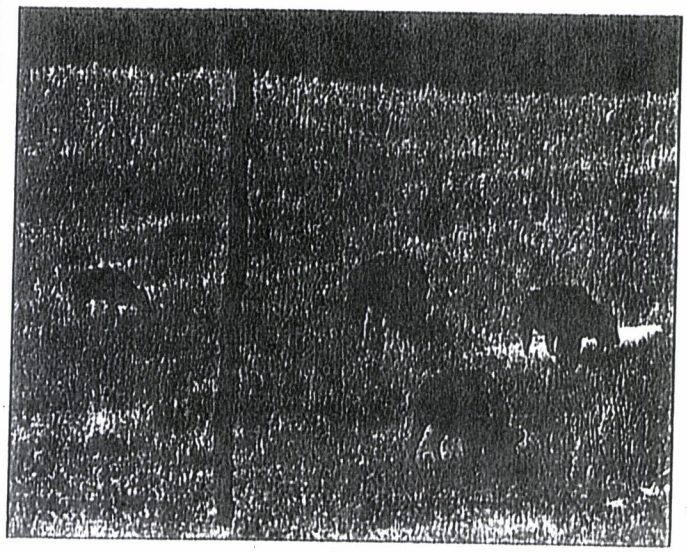
BY JEFF RENNICKE

THE KILLING LINE

Caught in the crossfire of politics and emotions, the buffalo of Yellowstone find no room to roam.

From a distance the sound could be ice cracking on the Yellowstone River or aspen on a backcountry ridgeline popping in the cold. Closer, it is unmistakable: gunshots just outside Yellowstone National Park.

Yellowstone has become an international symbol of wildlife protection. The sight of buffalo, elk, deer, and bear ambling unmolested and free inside the world's most famous park has become a kind of wilderness icon. For nearly 100 years, since the Park Protection Act of 1894, hunting has been illegal in the park. Here, we have decreed, wildlife will be allowed to follow its natural cycles of life and death. Here, wildlife will be able to do what it does best. Elk will bugle. Grizzlies will hibernate. And the buffalo will roam.



Once the buffalo wandered across a West that was wild and free. These days, the mighty beasts are being done in by boundary lines that exist only on paper.

Until recently, the roaming buffalo posed little problem. The park is big, in human terms at least, 2.2 million acres. And the number of buffalo is small, something between 2,600 and 2,800 animals divided into three herds. With a lot of space and relatively few animals, Yellowstone functioned as an artifical political island of safety and bliss for the buffalo. Everyone, it seemed, was happy. But the island was an illusion. National parks are not islands. Buffalo were never meant to live on islands, political or otherwise. They are not a species to be tethered by lines on a map. Conflict sat just at the boundary of the park waiting with the patience of a predator.

Then, during the severe winters of the mid-1970s, with buffalo numbers on the rise, a few animals from the Northern Range herd discovered a place called Blacktail Plateau, where the winter winds seemed a little less strong and the grasses a little easier to graze. Unfortunately the area was seven miles outside the park boundary.

At first the numbers were small and the problem was dealt with quietly. In 1974 park officials shot three bulls that had wandered across the line. One cow and one bull were destroyed in 1978. Park officials, the Montana Division of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, local ranchers, and just about everyone else hoped the problem and the buffalo would just go away. They didn't.

Increased herd size, drought, the loss of winter range in the recent fires, and perhaps other factors have pushed the buffalo even farther beyond the line. By winter 1986 some 250 animals were counted grazing outside the park. Last winter over 900 buffalo were either beyond the boundaries or dangerously close.

Buffalo roaming has raised concerns about property damage, public safety, and jurisdictional disputes. But the main concern is the spread of disease. Fifty-four percent of the buffalo tested in the herd carried a bacterial organism called *Burcella abortus,* which causes domestic cattle to abort their young. Although laboratory tests prove that buffalo can transmit the disease to domestic cattle, there has never been a single case of brucellosis in Montana traceable to the Yellowstone herds. Still, the ranching industry in Montana has spent millions of dollars fighting the disease and, since 1983, has been brucellosis-free.

To keep it that way, the NPS tried chasing the buffalo back into the park with helicopters, but herding an animal that stands six feet at the shoulder and can weigh 1,800 pounds is like herding parked cars. They tried bright lights, loud sirens, fences. Nothing worked for long. With a map of good wintering grounds engrained in the herd, the buffalo continued to do what buffalo do: They roamed.

In 1978 then-Secretary of the Interior Cecil Andrus ordered park employees to stop shooting the animals, so the task fell to state wildlife officials. Then, with heavy lobbying by sporting groups, the Montana legislature classified the buffalo a legal game animal, and the hunt went public. Last winter 569 buffalo were shot as they crossed out of the park. The hunters, chosen by lottery, called the hunt "the chance of a lifetime" and "a dream come true." Animal rights groups called it a nightmare, as sporting as shooting domestic cattle in a pasture, and dubbed it a "firing squad for buffalo." Protesters used cross-country skis and snowmobiles to herd buffalo away from the guns. They put their bodies in the line of fire. One protester was arrested for poking a hunter with a ski pole. Another smeared a hunter's face with buffalo blood. The confrontations and pictures of blood-splattered snow showed up in full color on the national news. And somewhere in the middle of all of this, the buffalo kept doing what comes naturally: roaming.

"If we left them alone, the buffalo would probably just spread out over the entire Yellowstone Valley and all the way to the Mississippi," says Stu Coleman, Yellowstone resource management specialist. It's a thought that makes wildlife

ANGELO M. CAGGIANO/RSI

managers and politicians shudder. So the lines have been drawn and the northern boundary of Yellowstone has become the killing line.

That so few animals crossing an invisible boundary line could be at the heart of such an emotionally charged issue is a sign of how dramatically the landscape of North America has changed in just 175 years. Estimates of the number of buffalo that once roamed this continent range as high as 100 million. Although we think of the animal today as a western species, it once ranged as far east as New York, as far south as Georgia and north into western New England.

It was on the plains, however, that the largest numbers were found. There buffalo represented one of the biggest congregations of large mammals ever seen on Earth. The herds literally turned the land dark with their numbers. On August 29, 1806 William Clark of the Lewis and Clark Expedition climbed a bluff and stared in wonder at the sight below. "We have discovered more [buffalo] than we had ever seen before at one time," he wrote. "If it not be impossible to calculate the moving multitude, which darkened the whole plain, we are convinced that twenty thousand would be no exaggerated number." Others witnessed even larger herds. One settler party in present-day Kansas sat surrounded by what "sounded more like distant thunder than anything else" and watched as a herd estimated at more than 20 miles wide and at least 60 miles long took two days to pass their camp.

When the amazement at the numbers wore off, the shooting started. At first the killing seemed as insignificant as flicking a few pebbles off a mountain. Still, there were prophesies of things to come. "Even now, there is a perceptible difference in the size of the herds, and before many years the buffalo, like the Great Auk, will have disappeared," wrote John James Audubon in 1843. "Surely this should not be permitted." It almost was.

The demise of the buffalo herds has been well-documented—Buffalo Bill Cody killing 4,280 in less than a year; the slaughter of whole herds just for the tongues; the "buffalo trains" that allowed passengers to shoot from the safety of a train car; the trading of 200,000 hides on the St. Louis market in a single day; and a pile of bones estimated at 350,000 cubic feet (enough bones for 90,000 buffalo) laid along the railroad tracks near Springfield, Colorado awaiting shipment.

Continued on page 116

In 1887 museum curators spent three months searching for display specimens. They found not a single buffalo left.

Continued from page 115

For a time in the mid-1800s buffalo hunting represented one of the largest industries in the United States. Over two million animals were killed annually at the height of the slaughter. It took its toll. In 1800 the land teemed with buffalo. In 1887 a team of collectors from the American Museum of Natural History set out to secure specimens for display. In three months of searching, they found not a single buffalo left to collect.

Despite the futility of the museum collectors, the buffalo was not completely extinct. A census by naturalist William T. Hornaday in 1889 found 200 in Yellowstone, 550 near the Great Slave Lake, 256 in zoos and private collections. From these and a scattering of survivors in the most remote pockets of the country, the buffalo hung on. In 1890 Wyoming put a 10-year moratorium on hunting. By 1897 it was a felony punishable by two years in prison to shoot a buffalo in Montana. In 1908 the National Bison Range was established, and the buffalo began its comeback. Today there are an estimated 100,000 buffalo spread out in such places as Theodore Roosevelt National Park of North Dakota; Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge in Oklahoma; Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming; the Henry Mountains of Utah; and, the largest herd, in Yellowstone. Even if all these animals were put together in one place, their number would hardly equal the size of one herd seen by some of the early pioneers, yet they represent a minor success story of the conservation movement.

The comeback of the buffalo, however, raises some interesting questions. As the symbol of the American West is brought back from the edge of extinction, it becomes all too apparent that the West it once symbolized has long since become extinct. The Transcontinental Railroad, completed in 1869, cut the West in half. Highways, fencelines, powerlines, irrigation ditches, pipelines, political boundaries, cities, and towns have cut up the West. Buffalo, in the numbers they once existed, survived only by the grace of space, the amazing, mind-boggling immensity of space that was once the American West. The passage of one large herd would devastate the fragile prairie ecosystem. What wasn't eaten was trampled or rubbed out in wallows. Creeks were soiled with droppings or silted by erosion. The only thing that saved the West was that it was so large that the buffalo could move on, giving the land time to heal. That is no longer true. Although the buffalo didn't become extinct, the space it needs to survive in great numbers did. Today there are just too many lines on the landscape, lines like the northern boundary of Yellowstone National Park.

As I write this, the buffalo of Yellowstone's Northern Range herd are already moving toward the border. Hunters are lining up for their permits, and protestors are digging in for the fight. There has been talk of using "bio-bullets" to inoculate the buffalo against disease, talk of building stronger fences or of extending the park to include the new wintering grounds of the buffalo. In a new "interim plan" recently announced by the Park Service, only bulls will be shot by hunters; cows will be destroyed by wildlife officials and the meat distributed to various relief agencies. Calves will be tranquilized and sold at auction. In the works is an extensive Environmental Impact Statement and Regional Buffalo Management Plan, looking at cooperative efforts between management agencies. "We are looking at a way to get the best deal for the buffalo and still address the brucellosis threat," says Stu Coleman.

Unlike the straight-edged northern boundary of the park, there are no clear-cut solutions here. Designating park boundaries with an eye toward ecosystems instead of political whimsy would help, but there is no guarantee the buffalo would stop at the next line that is drawn, or the next. Somewhere there will always be a line, and with it a bitter lesson that, while the buffalo as a species is making a comeback, the romantic notion of the wild, wild West unbroken, unbounded, and free, has long since ridden off into the sunset. Caught in the middle is the buffalo, tangled hopelessly in the lines on a map.

OUR OPINION

Heading for disaster

A bison hunt will turn into the worst kind of media circus

Bison are trickling over Yellowstone National Park borders. Animal rights activists are staking out a game warden's home. State Fish, Wildlife and Parks officials are skulking around in unmarked pickups like espionage agents. Officials in Helena are evading questions about their intentions.

This is no way to conduct a sport hunt; in fact it is a formula for disaster. And yet this is just the scenario that is shaping up around the bison hunt near Yellowstone Park.

If state officials force this issue by attempting some kind of clandestine hunt, the only conceivable outcome will be an unsavory media circus that will generate the worst kind of publicity for Montana, sport hunting and the National Park Service.

It's time to call a halt to the bison hunt and reevaluate the wisdom of this course of action.

For years the Montana buffalo hunt has served as a reasonable solution to the bison problem, but animal rights activists recognize it as a perfect arena in which to dramatize their cause. The very nature of the hunt is turning it into a front line in the larger controversy over all big-game hunting.

The lumbering beasts take little or no action to avoid the hunters, and the shooting usually takes place in easily accessible open areas that lend themselves to the equivalent of national news media sound studios. It's the animal rights activists' dream come true, and they have made clear their intentions of taking advantage of it.

On Dec. 14, the Montana Fish and Game Commission is scheduled to convene and vote on an interim plan for dealing with the bison. The plan calls for state and federal officials to meet buffalo migrating out of the park during the winter, killing cow bison and capturing calves for later sale. Montana hunters are to be selected to shoot the roaming bull bison.

Fish and Game Commission members should insist that National Park Service officials attend this meeting and rethink the plan. If the only alternative is for Park Service officials to kill all bison leaving the park at its borders, then so be it. These are national park bison, and the migrations onto non-park lands should be a Park Service problem.

The anti-hunting movement is gaining momentum, and hunters should be on alert that their sport is threatened. Arguments can and will be made that caving into animal rights activists on this front will lead the fray into other areas of sport hunting, and it probably will. But a shouting match on the national evening news will only play into the hands of the activists.

The bison hunt is not the place to make a stand on the hunting controversy. It's a battle the hunters are bound to lose.

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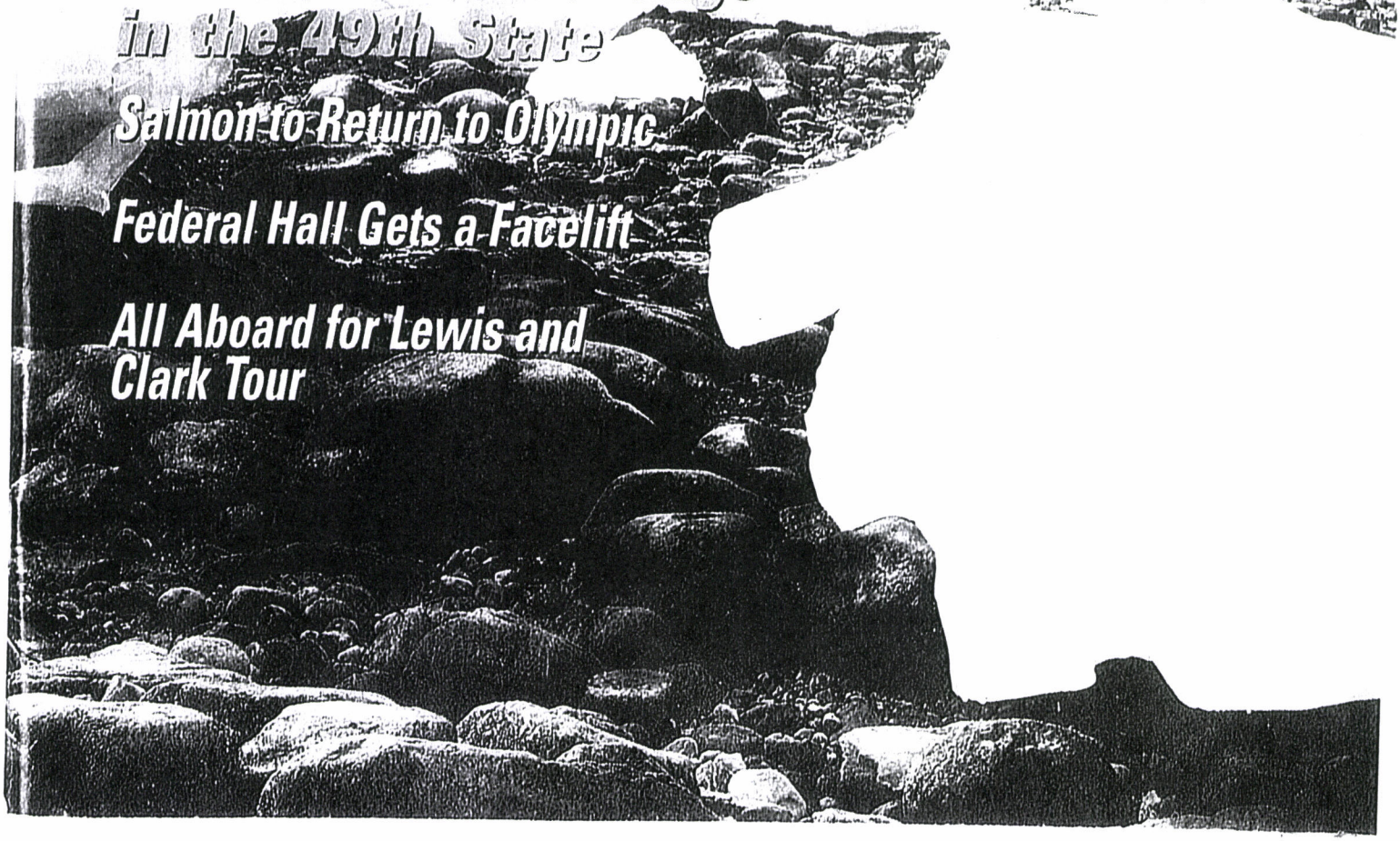


Stopping the Slaughter

Like the Stars and Stripes or the Liberty Bell, the bison is a symbol of America, yet last year federal tax dollars supported the slaughter of 244 bison at or near Yellowstone.

By U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall II

This is a test. Name the largest land mammal in North America. Now name the only animal, other than the eagle, to appear on U.S. currency during the 20th century. Finally, name an animal being systematically slaughtered using federal tax dollars. Stumped? Sadly, the answer to all of these questions is the same: the American bison.

Like the Stars and Stripes or the Liberty Bell, the bison is literally a symbol of America. This magnificent animal's shaggy head and massive shoulders graced the "tails" side of 1.2 billion Buffalo nickels minted between 1913 and 1938. The coin's designer, James Earl Fraser, an assistant to sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens and a product of the American Plains, is said to have chosen the bison precisely because its image expressed such a distinctively American theme.

Rep. Nick J. Rahall II (D-W.Va.) is the ranking Democratic member of the House Resources Committee. He is serving his 14th term in Congress.

And yet, the U.S. Department of Interior—which took the bison as its emblem—has participated in the slaughter of 278 animals this year. Last year, federal tax dollars supported the slaughter of 244 animals, and over the last 20 years, U.S. taxpayers have helped pay for the killing of more than 3,500 bison. The vast majority of these doomed animals were captured *within* Yellowstone National Park. Surprised? Most people are. The general public is under the impression that these American icons are being sheltered and protected by the federal government, not rounded up and shot.

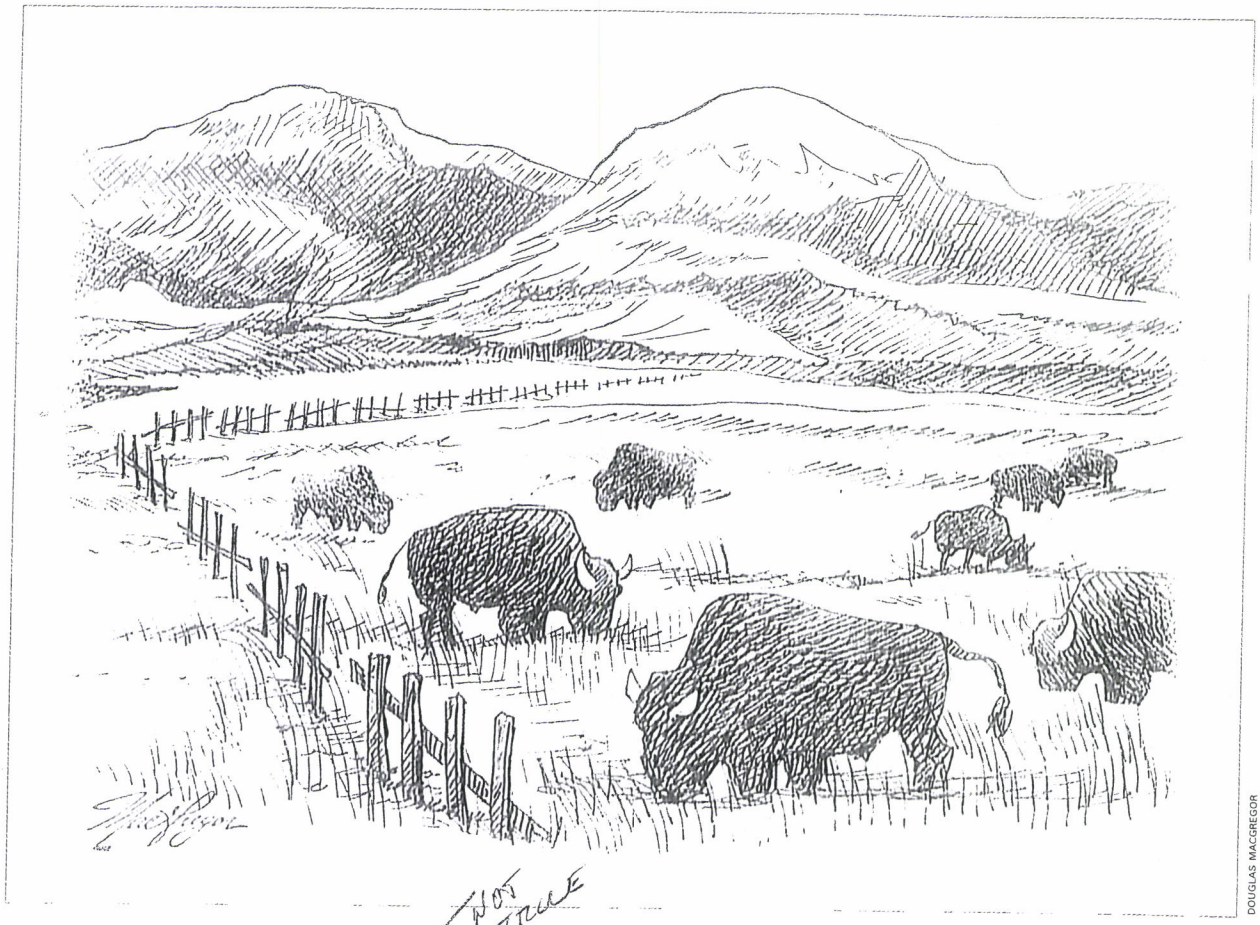
The department's justifications for killing bison are nonsensical. During the winter months, Yellowstone is blanketed by three to four feet of snow and ice; high temperatures are in the single digits with overnight lows below zero Fahrenheit. Yellowstone bison scavenge for any food that might be available in these extreme conditions, while protecting their young and conserving what little energy they have.

As part of this desperate race to sur-

Preserving an Icon

During the 1800s, millions of American bison were killed. By the last decade of the 19th century, only a few hundred remained. Yellowstone National Park had the last remnant of a wild buffalo herd. By 1901, there were only 25 animals. The offspring of these survivors constitute today's Yellowstone herd. Yellowstone's herd is the only truly wild, free-roaming buffalo herd that has continuously occupied its native habitat in the United States. Today, Yellowstone's buffalo number about 4,000.

The Yellowstone Buffalo Preservation Act (H.R. 3446) is before the House Resources Committee. The bill provides for the protection of the last wild and genetically pure American buffalo, calling for the end of the ongoing slaughter. It recognizes that the American buffalo (*Bison bison*) has ecological, cultural, historical, and symbolic significance to the United States. The bill currently has 102 co-sponsors in addition to sponsor Rep. Maurice Hinchey (D-N.Y.). The bill was referred to the House Resources Committee in November, but a hearing has not yet been scheduled. Check out www.npca.org for more information about this bill.



DOUGLAS MACGREGOR

vive until the spring thaw, some bison leave Yellowstone to seek food at lower elevations, a journey they have been making since well before the national park or the state of Montana existed. Once they leave, however, they can come into contact with cattle allowed to graze on adjacent public and private land in Montana. Some of the bison have been exposed to brucellosis, a disease that can be dangerous to cattle. The theory goes that if the cattle consume birth material from pregnant female bison, the cattle might get the disease, which can cause cattle to abort their young. If that happened, Montana's cattle industry might lose money.

You may have noticed that those last few sentences contained more than a few "ifs" and "mights." That is because there has never been a documented case of brucellosis being transferred from bison to cattle in the wild. Never.

And yet the state of Montana, at the behest of the cattle industry, insists that the only way to deal with the theoretical possibility that it might is to routinely slaughter bison that step over the invisible park boundary, bulls and cows, juvenile and mature animals alike. Making this hysterical overreaction even more unbelievable is the fact that most of the bison are not even tested for exposure to brucellosis before being slaughtered.

As you might expect, the vision of wildlife "managers" shooting trapped bison is not particularly popular, and this is where your tax dollars come in. The state offers to kill fewer bison in return for getting uniformed Interior employees involved in the killing. Having members of one of the foremost conservation agencies in the world, the Park Service, aid and abet the slaughter provides the activity with a sheen of legitimacy just thick enough to blunt public outrage. And so the killing continues, on the federal taxpayer's buffalo nickel.

This has got to stop. If states want to allow industry to dictate the continued use of wildlife management policies that were popular in the 1800s, which is their right, they must be made to own up to their actions. The U.S. Department of Interior, an agency with a conservation mandate funded by the American people, should not help do the dirty work. Interior must continue working cooperatively to address the theoretical threat of disease through the hazing and capture of bison, through development of a vaccine for both cattle and bison, and through the use of other tools. But the tools they use should no longer be lethal.

There are plenty of things we can and should be spending federal tax dollars on. Killing one of the most powerful symbols of America, for no good reason at all, is not one of them.

ll the News
s Fit to Print"

The New York Times

National Ed
Southern California: Vall patches of fog. Otherwise high clouds. Highs 65-7 valleys and 73-79 deserts. and forecasts for other a

:XVIII .... No. 47,789 Copyright © 1989 The New York Times WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1989 Printed in California

sh Savings Arithmetic: itics See a Lot of Big If's

By MICHAEL QUINT

dent Bush's plan to re- e financial troubles of the s savings industry is based mptions that interest rates cline sharply and deposits e steadily in coming years, ing to figures made avail- esterday by the Office of ement and Budget.

projections were immedi- criticized by some private ts who said the figures based on an overly optimis- w of the economy, interest and inflation over the next rs. They said the plan un- imated the true cost of the by many billions of dollars.

e interest-rate projections ildly optimistic," said Bert a consultant in Alexandria,

figures released yesterday d to the debate that has sur- led the rescue plan ever it was announced two weeks

. Bush's plan calls for $126 n of spending over the next ars to cure the industry's sting losses, including $40 bil- from the Treasury, which by calculations rises to $60 bil- over that period. He asked gress to approve the plan n 45 days.

e debate involves two sets of ulations: the overall cost of ng out the industry, and the to taxpayers.

e costs to taxpayers could widely depending on how h the industry can pay in de- t insurance premiums to the eral Savings and Loan Insur- e Corporation. If deposits fall, as they have in the last few months, total premiums will be smaller, and the money must come from another source. The cost to the taxpayer also depends on the interest rates paid on $50 billion of bonds to be issued by the Resolution Funding Corporation, the Government agency created to help finance the plan.

For example, the budget office says, savings and loan deposits will grow by about 7.2 percent annually, a sharp turnaround from last year, when deposits fell by $8.4 billion, or nearly 1 percent. The Treasury also assumed that interest rates on bonds issued by the funding agency would fall steadily from the 9.1 percent yield anticipated for 1989.

Interest rates on Treasury bonds are already high enough at 9.05 percent to cast doubt on that assumption.

Based on Official Forecasts

A spokeswoman for the budget office said the agency's estimates of declining interest rates and inflation were based explicitly on economic forecasts announced earlier this year by the Administration.

Assessing the overall cost of closing or merging all failed savings units involves even more variables, analysts agree. The results, they say, will vary depending on changes in the prices of real estate, interest rates and the skill of Federal regulators in managing real estate before it is sold.

"I didn't envy anybody having

Continued on Page C5, Column 2

SALVADOR REBELS OFFER TO DISARM IF ARMY IS RECAST

MOOD AT TALKS IS 'GOOD'

As Delegates Meet in Mexico, Guerrilla Raids at Home Kill 6 and Wound 18

By LARRY ROHTER
Special to The New York Times

OAXTEPEC, Mexico, Feb. 21 — Salvadoran guerrilla leaders said today that they would lay down their arms permanently and "incorporate ourselves into the nation's political life" if the Salvadoran Government made fundamental changes in the military apparatus.

The proposal came on the second day of negotiations between the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front and representatives of El Salvador's political parties on an earlier rebel proposal to postpone the presidential elections scheduled for March 19.

No Government Role

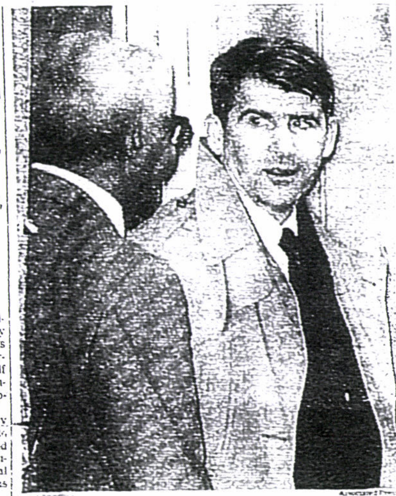
The talks, held on neutral ground in a Mexican Government resort here, are the first between the two sets of political forces, and both sides said they had been pleasantly surprised by their ability to maintain what one participant called "a good and serious atmosphere."

No immediate response from the Salvadoran Government was expected. Neither the Government nor the military is taking part in the talks here, nor is the United States, which has provided hundreds of millions of dollars in aid each year to keep the rebels from overthrowing President Jose Napoleon Duarte.

Representatives of many of the 13 political parties taking part in the negotiations, who are certain to come under additional political pressure at home as a result of the new rebel initiative, said they had not had sufficient time to digest the new proposal and therefore could not comment on it. But others said they regarded the initiative as an important and as [illegible]

[illegible] As the delegates [illegible] was new violence today in San Salvador, where rebels used a car bomb [illegible] launch an attack on an army brigade [illegible] killing two civilians and wounding five [illegible] reported. [illegible]

Continued on Page A8, Column 1



orth's Trial Opens After Much Delay

ver L. North leaving Federal District Court in Washington yesterday after the opening arguments. The former officer is charged with a zen crimes in connection with the Iran-contra affair. Page A12.

Statesman Bush's Debut

President Will Take World Stage in Asia, But Many Criticize Delay in Raising Curtain

By R.W. APPLE Jr.
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Feb. 21 — President [illegible] steps onto the world stage this [illegible] without much of his supporting [illegible] and without a polished script, at a [illegible] when his rival for international stardom, Mikhail S. Gorbachev, is winning plaudits almost everywhere.

By and large, the first month of Mr. Bush's [illegible] has been marked by [illegible] failure to [illegible] approaching a complete foreign policy team and, more important, his [illegible] so far to outline a strategy for responding to the Soviet Union's diplomatic initiatives, have begun to cause [illegible] to raise eyebrows at home and [illegible]

"We understand the need for a [illegible] period," a Cabinet member in a major European country said last week, "but enough! The Russians have pulled out of Afghanistan, they're making unilateral troop reductions in Eastern Europe and Gorbachev is popping up everywhere. Bush has to start taking some initiatives of his own, or the Soviets will gain the strategic initiative."

Mr. Bush is eager to make his debut as a world leader in his own right, and he has seized upon the state funeral of Emperor Hirohito in Japan, which is [illegible] for a trip to three nations [illegible] tals — Tokyo, Beijing and Seoul — all in only five days.

Key Posts Still Vacant

But diplomats based in Washington commented today that it was "very odd indeed," as one of them put it, that Mr. Bush is traveling to Asia without having named an Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, just as Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d went to Europe earlier this month before Mr. Bush had named an assistant secretary for European affairs. Dozens of other key jobs also remain unfilled, most notably that of Secretary of Defense. Mr. Bush's nomination of Senator John G. Tower for that post remains deeply mired in controversy in the Senate.

"Largely because of Gorbachev, everything is in motion everywhere, except in Washington," said Richard C. Holbrooke, who held the assistant secretary's job dealing with Asia in the Carter Administration. "Bush has

Continued on Page A16, Column 4

BUSH FINDS TO MURDER 'DEEPLY OF

ISSUES WARNI

U.S. Administrat With Caution Hostages in

By THOMAS L.
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, F Bush today criticize decree against the Rushdie as "deeply norms of civilized warned that Iran w countable" for any American interests.

The President's first reaction to the roar over the call by lah Khomeini, Iran' for Muslims to see Rushdie, the author Satanic Verses."

The remarks were so far by anyone in about the affair, wh delicate time in relations.

Support for

"I strongly suppo ration in respons threats against R dent said, referring members of the Eu to remove their ch heran after the Ira

"However offens be," the President der and offering re tration are deep norms of civilized position on terrori the light of Iran's any action be take interests, the Gove expect to be held a

Asked whether European allies nomic sanctions a Bush said, "The that, I'm sure, bu we're from there."

Iran Withdr

[illegible] from most of We Britain, which ha ther than its Eu partners by pull matic staff out of Iran to withdraw London. [Page A6.]

Mr. Bush's react days of restrained beginning with James A. Baker Thursday describ meini's call for M "regrettable."

The President' after several days cism by writers' and civil libertie that the Adminis and reserved in it member Authors ican Civil Liberti had both written ing a forceful stat

While senior A would not say s

Continued on

gue Jails a Major Playwright For Inciting Protests Last Month

By JOHN TAGLIABUE
Special to The New York Times

[illegible] Feb. 21 — A Czechoslovak [illegible] convicted the playwright [illegible] dent author Vaclav Havel of legal protests and obstructing e and sentenced him to nine n prison.

ntence, delivered by the judge se at the end of a daylong trial, the Government's refusal to h the political opposition sup- y the 52-year-old Czech author. rague leadership, whose tenure der the eye of a Soviet occupa- y in 1968, has been slow to keep h the changes under way in the nion. Today's verdict provides evidence of its refusal to follow of Moscow's East bloc allies, arly Hungary and Poland, in to accommodate the political on.

were the only foreign correspondent [illegible]

In a courthouse [illegible] a second trial began today of seven people, including Jana Petrova, the 22-year-old leader of an independent antiwar organization. The seven face sentences of up to two years in prison on charges of hooliganism in connection with the January demonstrations. The verdict is expected Wednesday.

The trials were among 31 separate

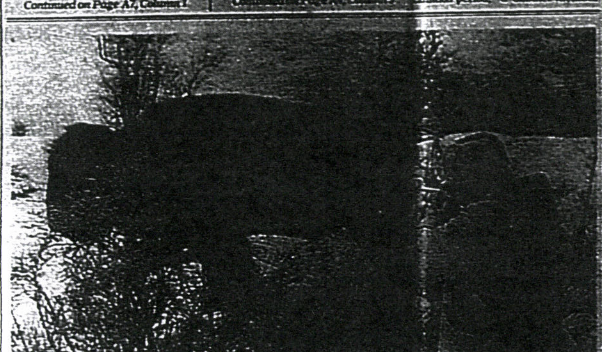
Continued on Page A7, Column 1

Palach Gesture

avel was sentenced for his role ally in Prague's Wenceslas on Jan. 16. The demonstration ed to commemorate the death ago of a student, Jan Palach, fire to himself to protest the d invasion in 1968. The police the rally.

tatement delivered before the Mr. Havel said, "I do not feel ut if sentenced, I will accept ishment as a sacrifice for a se, which is nothing in the face timate sacrifice of Jan Palach, e sought to commemorate."

emarks were scribbled fur- a reporter for The Associated who, with a correspondent for e official Soviet press agency,



Literary World Lashe After a Week of H

By MICHAEL T. KAUFMAN

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...nce, delivered by the judge ...t the end of a daylong trial, ...e Government's refusal to ...ne political opposition sup... ...e 52-year-old Czech author. ...ne leadership, whose tenure ...the eye of a Soviet occupa... ...1968, has been slow to keep ...e changes under way in the ...n. Today's verdict provides ...lence of its refusal to follow Moscow's East bloc allies, ...y Hungary and Poland, in ...accommodate the political

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...leader of an independent antiwar organization. The seven face sentences of up to two years in prison on charges of hooliganism in connection with the January demonstrations. The verdict is expected Wednesday.

The trials were among 31 separate

Continued on Page A7, Column 1

...dor, where rebels used a car bomb to launch an attack on an army brigade, killing two civilians and wounding five, Reuters reported. Almost simultaneously, the guerrillas attacked a military security brigade in Zacatecoleca,

Continued on Page A4, Column 3

...failure so far to outline a strategy for responding to the Soviet Union's diplomatic initiatives, have begun in recent days to raise eyebrows at home and abroad.

"We understand the need for a transition period," a Cabinet member ...

...only five days.

Key Posts Still Vacant

But diplomats based in Washington commented today that it was "very odd indeed," as one of them put it, that Mr. Bush is traveling to Asia without having named an Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, just as Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d went to Europe earlier this month before Mr. Bush had named an assistant secretary for European affairs. Dozens of other key jobs also remain unfilled, most notably that of Secretary of Defense; Mr. Bush's nomination of former Senator John G. Tower for that post remains deeply mired in controversy in the Senate.

"Largely because of Gorbachev, everything is in motion everywhere, except in Washington," said Richard C. Holbrooke, who held the assistant secretary's job dealing with Asia in the Carter Administration. "Bush has

Continued on Page A10, Column 4

...Britain, which ... ...ther than its Europ... partners by pulling ... ...matic staff out of T... Iran to withdraw its ... London. [Page A6.]

Mr. Bush's reaction ... days of restrained An... beginning with Sec... James A. Baker 3d ... Thursday describing ... ...meini's call for Mr. R... "regrettable."

The President's ... after several days of ... ...cism by writers' gr... and civil liberties a... that the Administra... and reserved in its c... member Authors G... ...ican Civil Liberties ... had both written to ... ing a forceful stater...

While senior Adm... would not say so e...

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The New York Times/Jim Wilson

A bison about to be shot in Montana, north of the boundary of Yellowstone National Park. Under Montana law, bison straying from the park must be killed; more than 400 have been killed this winter.

Red Harvest in the Snow as Buffalo Stray and Die

By TIMOTHY EGAN

Special to The New York Times

GARDINER, Mont., Feb. 17 — At dawn the buffalo moving north along the Yellowstone River are covered with fresh snow, their enormous heads wearing crowns of white. In sub-zero cold they exhale steam through the fist-size holes of their nostrils.

Using radios and field glasses, hunters track the animals, renegades from Yellowstone National Park, as they tromp above the half-frozen river. Trucks race up a road, moving closer. Game wardens order the hunters out of their cars and give them permission to fire.

From 25 feet away Bill Dede drops a female with a single rifle shot to the head. The creature stumbles a few feet, then collapses, blood spilling into the snow. "This is a once-in-a-lifetime thrill," Mr. Dede says, looking over his kill.

So it goes in what wildlife officials say is the largest buffalo hunt in North America since the 19th century, when overhunting reduced a population of millions to a handful of survivors inside Yellowstone park. Last year only 39 bison were shot in Montana. This year 422 have been killed by hunters, and wildlife experts say that up to 650, or nearly one-fourth of all the bison that live inside Yellowstone, could be killed by mid-March.

The hunt has stirred frontier enthusiasm, but even the hunters acknowledge it is not exactly sporting. Hunters pursue the creatures in four-wheel-drive trucks and blast away at short range: the kill rate is 100 percent. Many wildlife protection advocates have expressed outrage.

There are few sights in America to rival a 2,000-pound wild animal running through knee-deep powder snow in a narrow canyon in the Rocky Mountains. This year, more buffalo are running free outside the borders of their

Continued on Page A8, Column 1

Literary World Lashes... After a Week of He...

By MICHAEL T. KAUFMAN

After an initial period of sputter and stall, the public indignation of writers, librarians and civil libertarians grew yesterday in response to the death threats against the author Salman Rushdie and the removal of his novel from many bookstores.

While the executives of major bookstore chains continued to defend their withdrawal of the novel, "The Satanic Verses," independent booksellers in many parts of the country were reordering stocks of the novel. On the basis of sales last week the book gained second place in the hardcover fiction category of Best Sellers that will appear in the March 5 issue of The New York Times Book Review.

Author Remains in Hiding

As the protests increased, the United Nations Secretary General, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, issued a statement appealing for "the threats to the life and human rights of Salman Rushdie" to be lifted.

Through all this, Mr. Rushdie has not been heard from since the weekend, when he expressed "profound regret" for the distress ... caused to "sinc... statement was not ... ...ogy by the Irania... for his killing, ... Ruhollah Khome... was issued, Mr. ... hiding under the ... security forces.

Mr. Rushdie's ... Marianne Wiggin... to have canceled ... tour for her own ...

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The New York Times/Jim Wilson

Hunters examining the carcasses of bison they shot, under supervision, outside the boundaries of Yellowstone National Park in Montana.

Red Harvest in the Snow as Buffalo Stray and Die

Continued From Page 1

home in Yellowstone National Park than at any time since the 19th century, and every one of them is marked for death.

Drought and fires have destroyed much of the bison's winter foraging ground in Yellowstone, where the herd reached a record size of about 2,700 before the start of hunting. In search of food, hundreds of buffalo have left park boundaries to follow the Yellowstone River north onto private property and Forest Service Land.

Under a Montana law designed to protect the cattle industry, any buffalo that crosses the park borders onto state property is to be shot. Livestock owners fear that bison will infect their cows with brucellosis, a disease that causes females to abort their calves.

Symbol of the West

However, some biologists dispute whether the cattle would be infected by the bison (which is the scientifically correct term). Various studies are under way now which could reshape the debate over what to do with the growing herds of Rocky Mountain buffalo, once the symbol of the America West.

Game wardens used to do all the shooting of border-crossers. A 1985 change in Montana law allowed private hunters to kill buffalo if supervised by wildlife officials. They are selected from a pool of hunters who put their name on a list in the fall. Anyone chosen pays $200 for the license.

Once called,, each hunter gets one chance at a buffalo. But, as Montana game officials point out, no one goes home empty-handed. The hunters keep the meat.

"Let's face it, this is not a hunt, it's a harvest," said Dan Tyers, wildlife biologist with the Gallatin National Forest, which borders the park on the north. The animals are not slow or stupid, he explained, but they make easy targets and can be approached by car in the upper Yellowstone Valley, where most of the hunting is taking place.

Hunting in Shifts

The hunters gather in darkness outside the ranger station here, where game wardens map a strategy for two shifts of shooting, one in the morning, the other in the afternoon.

Then they go by caravan about 10 miles north of this park border town, following the Yellowstone River to places in the valley where the bison have gathered. The animals are remarkably strong and athletic, able to leap most fences — or knock them down — and move at great speed through heavy snow.

But once the hunting caravans catch up with them, they offer little resistance. "They just kind of look at you, even after one of their mates is shot, wondering what the hell's going on," said John Cada, regional wildlife manager for the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, which is supervising the hunt.

Wardens try to get hunters to kill the animals with one shot to the heart or head. But it isn't always that easy. On an afternoon hunt a teen-age boy, a novice shooter, fired at his buffalo and badly wounded the creature. When the warden ordered the boy to finish the kill, he hesitantly approached the animal, then fired two rifle shots from close range.

The Meat Is Secondary

After the killing, video cameras record the hunters with their prey. On this day the upper Yellowstone Valley was full of animal organs and blood and circling eagles as 26 buffalo were shot. The meat is prized, but most hunters shoot a buffalo to be able in order to hang a head on the wall.

Wildlife biologists say that unless the National Park Service reduces the herd through population control or increases the winter feeding range by and acquisition, these types of hunts will continue every winter.

"After 30 years of working in Yellowstone, I've never seen the winter feeding range in worse condition," said Mary Meagher, a bison biologist at Yellowstone.

Ms. Meagher said the Yellowstone herd, descended from the last free-roaming buffalo in America, has grown from fewer than 100 in the 1960's to its record size today. As the herd expanded, park officials experimented with barricades and selective shooting of buffalo near park boundaries. But long the way the bison of Yellowstone learned how to avoid attempts to stop their migration, and shooting by park rangers was abandoned.

Amory Takes Aim

Two years ago the park service was sued by the New York-based Fund for Animals, which contended Yellowstone officials had a responsibility to protect the herd from hunters by keeping the animals in the park. The suit was dismissed by a Federal court in Montana last year.

"The park service should do something more than sit on their hands with this phony natural management plan of theirs," said Cleveland Amory, founder and president of the Fund for Animals, which he described as a society opposed to most sport-hunting.

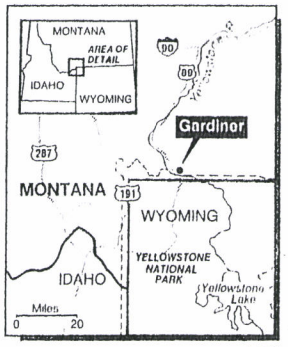
"Those hunters in Montana are a bunch of blood-thirsty people who would kill their own mothers if they walked on four feet," said Mr. Amory.

In the Upper Yellowstone Valley, the hunters are resentful of outsiders, saying they do not expect most city people to understand why they kill these large, majestic creatures.

"I can't describe it as anything but a great opportunity," said Mr. Dede as he wenched his dead buffalo onto the back of his truck.

Mary Meagher, who thinks she knows as much about the buffalo as anybody, also has an idea about why people kill the creature she has spent her lifetime studying.

"There's a real mystique for these people who want to shoot a bison," she said. "We're not all that far removed from the frontier."



The New York Times/Feb. 22, 1989

Buffalo are hunted along the Yellowstone River north of the park.

Hunters thin the herds that wander from Yellowstone.

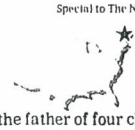
Bulldozers Are Used In Attempt to Reach Jet Crash Wreckage

HURLBURT FIELD, Fla., Feb. 21 (AP) — Rescuers used bulldozers and bridge-building equipment today in an attempt to reach the wreckage of an Air Force cargo plane that crashed in a swamp Monday. There was no word on the fate of the eight people aboard.

The four-engine C-141B jet based at Norton Air Force Base in San Bernadino, Calif., crashed and burned four miles north of here while on its landing approach.

Seven crew members from Norton were on board. Also, a military retiree boarded during a refueling stop in Colorado Springs, officials said.

By LYN RIDDLE
Special to The New York Times



BANGOR, Me. — Three years ago the Rev. Herman (Buddy) Frankland, married and the father of four children, admitted a sexual relationship with a parishioner and resigned as pastor of the 3,000-member Bangor Baptist Church, one of the largest fundamentalist churches in New England.

Now he has returned from Missouri to start another church here, touching off a debate between his new parishioners, who say he should be forgiven, and those local Baptists who say his presence can only reopen old wounds.

The 53-year-old Mr. Frankland conducts his new ministry from the Ramada Inn, where since late January he has been delivering two sermons a week. The setting alone provides quite a contrast to the old days, when Mr. Frankland, a onetime independent candidate for Governor, became one of Maine's most controversial figures by preaching in exceptionally forceful terms, before many hundreds of congregants, against homosexuality and what he called "loose living."

• • •

Mr. Frankland founded Bangor Baptist Church in the living room of his home in 1966 and, after a succession of addresses, bought a 100-acre tract on the outskirts of this city of 32,000 people. The congregation built a cavernous sanctuary, a school for children from kindergarten through 12th grade and a 100,000-watt radio station.

Then it all collapsed, or nearly so. After Mr. Frankland's affair with a teacher at the school became known in the fall of 1985, he was forced to resign. The Rev. Jerry Falwell heeded Mr. Frankland's request to assume control of the ministry, but Mr. Falwell could not prevent a dwindling in membership, which eventually hit bottom at 100, and in donations. Bangor Baptist was near bankruptcy.

Mr. Frankland then started a vending machine company here but later sold his interest and moved back to Springfield, where he joined a friend in a roofing and siding concern. When he returned to Bangor last month, he said he was doing so because he had felt guilty in ignoring the pleas of many of his former congregants, who had written and called him in Springfield.

Rob Hinds, who left Bangor Baptist when Mr. Frankland did, was one of those who encouraged him to try here again. "After he left, the preaching, the spirit, just wasn't the same," said Mr. Hinds.

• • •

Among those who found Mr. Frankland's return less welcome was Mr. Falwell, who told The Bangor Daily News that the former pastor was showing a lack of concern for Bangor Baptist by starting a new church here. "I personally feel it is very unethical for Mr. Frankland to return to Bangor for the purpose of establishing a church," Mr. Falwell said.

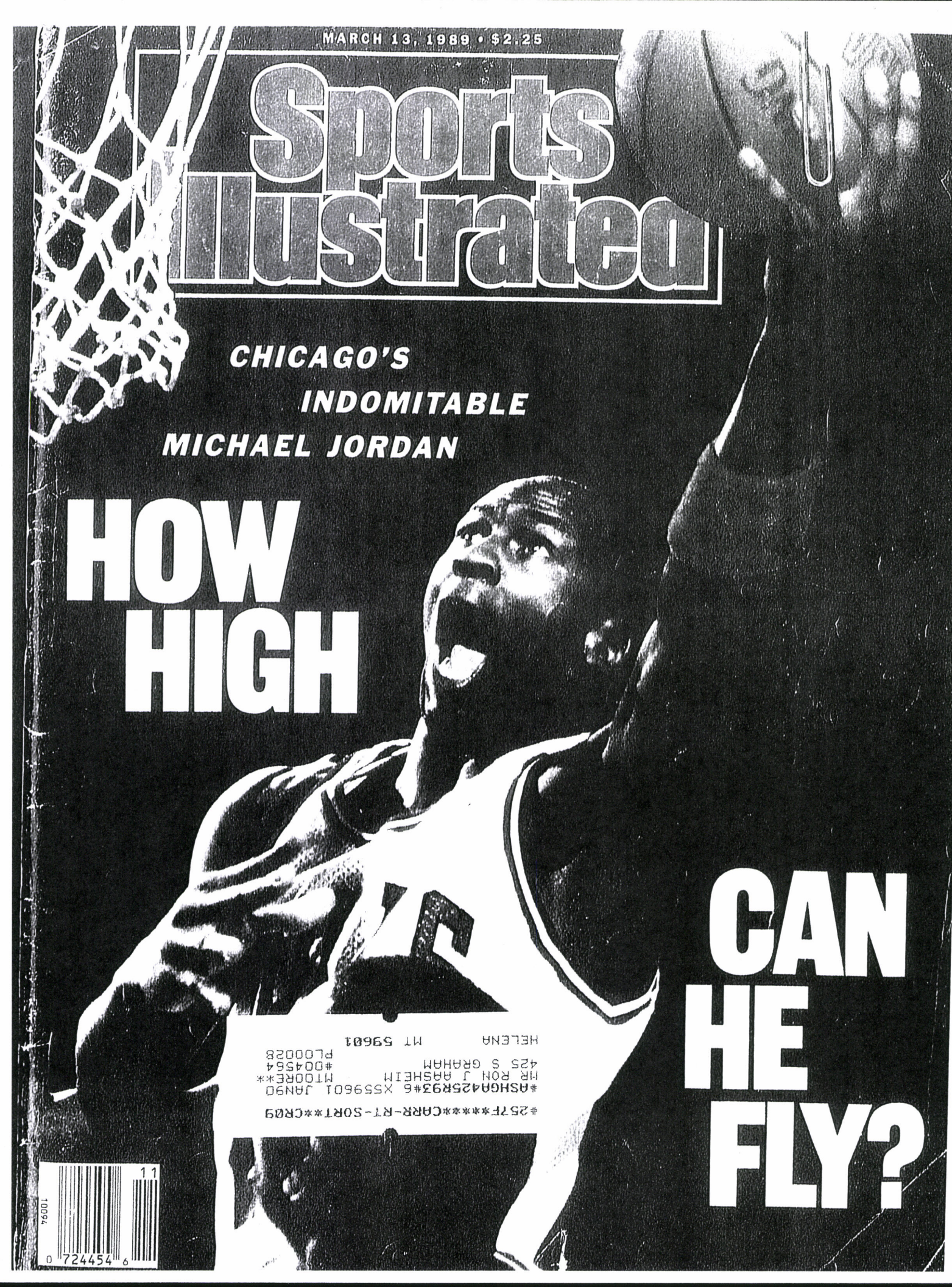
The Rev. Kenneth Chapman, a teacher at the Falwell-founded Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va., who was pastor at Bangor Baptist for almost two years, until last October, agrees with Mr. Falwell. "He left, and he should have stayed gone," Mr.

MARCH 13, 1989 • $2.25

Sports Illustrated

CHICAGO'S INDOMITABLE MICHAEL JORDAN

HOW HIGH CAN HE FLY?



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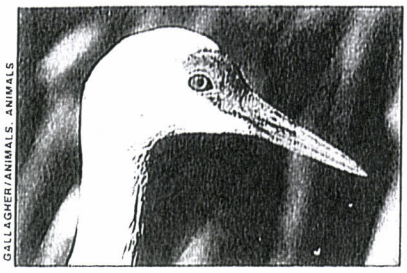
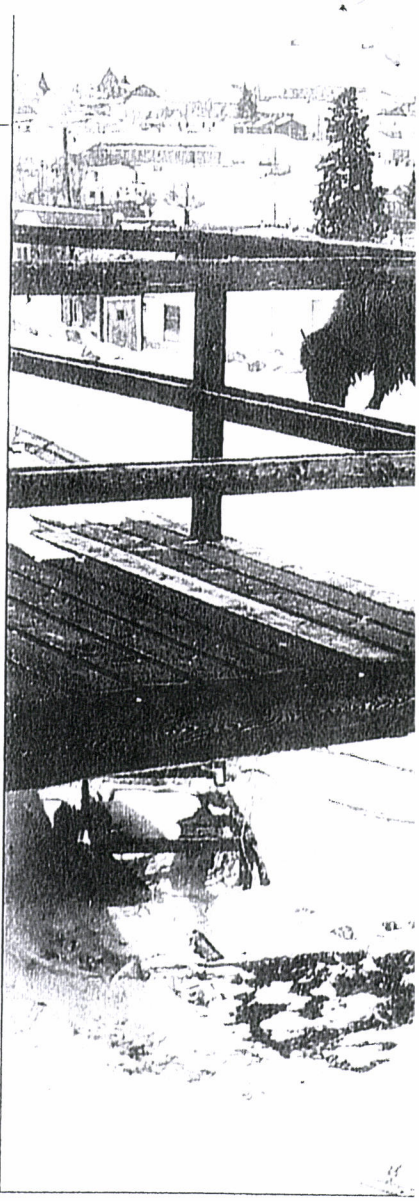
A Climate for DEATH

BY PENNY WARD MOSER



GALLAGHER/ANIMALS, ANIMALS

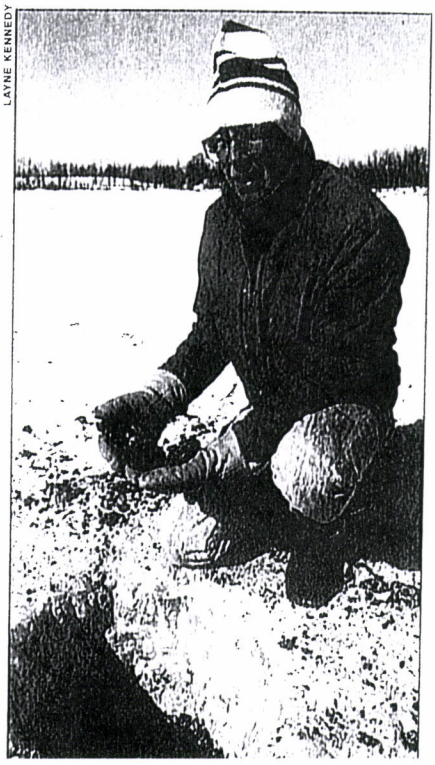
THE DROUGHT AND EXTREME weather conditions that have afflicted much of the nation for the past year continue to wreak havoc on wildlife, including the sandhill crane *(left)*, elk and buffalo. In many of these areas, snow and bitter cold have only served to worsen the damage to the environment



PHIL HUBER

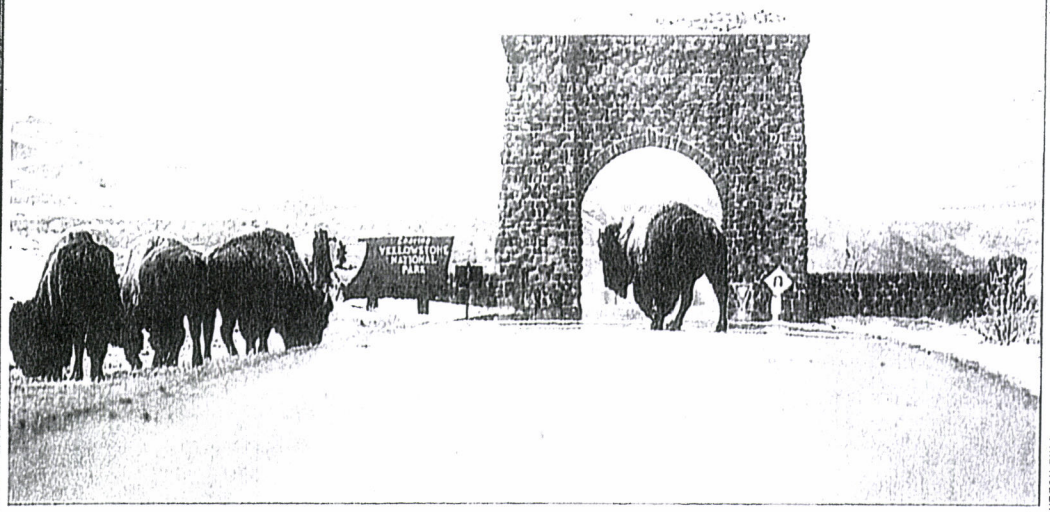
Elk and buffalo from Yellowstone foraged far afield and some died, while in Minnesota Gilbert drew only frozen mud from the ponds.

PHIL HUBER



LAYNE KENNEDY


PHIL HUBER



PHIL HUBER

Buffalo in search of food move toward Ye lowstone's border and a mandated deat

WHEN JIM GILBERT, A NATURALIST at the Lowry Nature Center 25 miles west of Minneapolis, took a group of schoolchildren out onto a frozen pond in January, he planned to show them hibernating turtles. Instead, he and the children got a look at nature at its cruelest. "We cored the ice by hand, each kid taking turns with a chisel," says Gilbert. "We punched a two-foot-wide hole through 14 inches of ice. The kids were really having fun. Then we bent down and looked in, but we didn't see any turtles. The turtles were dead."

Beneath the ice, last summer's insidious drought had extracted its toll. "The pond had vanished—the water under the ice was gone," says Gilbert, who has been bringing groups to this spot for 20 years. "Without the protective covering of unfrozen water, turtles cannot survive the winter."

Last year, more than 1,000 daily record-high temperatures were registered across the U.S. But as fall temperatures cooled, so did the nation's concern with the worst drought in decades. Although rain and snow have alleviated dry conditions in the Upper Great Lakes and portions of the South, as of late February the National Weather Service's Palmer Drought Index revealed that only five states—Arkansas, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan and Tennessee—were not suffering prolonged drought in at least some areas. The situation in Florida and along parts of the Texas and Louisiana Gulf coast had gone from bad to worse. For much of the country's wildlife the drought's legacy of depleted forage and cover has made the winter of '88–89 or of the worst ever.

Duck populations may fall to an al time low this summer. The U.S. Fis and Wildlife Service's recently comple ed survey of birds wintering on the Pa cific Flyway shows that the number c ducks is 38% below normal. At the bot tom of the count is the beleaguered pin tail duck, which is off 64%. Says Ph Million, a spokesman for the Fish an Wildlife Service, "It's really grim."

What's worse is that unless a lot o places get rain or more snow in a bi hurry, ducks and other shorebirds mov ing north are going to find their res stops and breeding areas in bad shape o even out of business. At the Cheyenn Bottoms Wildlife Area in Kansas, a cru cial 19,850-acre wetlands complex tha serves as stopover for 45% of all North American shorebirds in their spring mi gration, only two of the five pools have water. Time was when one third of a million ducks a day rested and fed at the Bottoms on their way north. This year manager Karl Grover figures, those two pools will have only about two to three inches of water in them, less than half their normal depth. "The dabbling ducks won't be doing any swimming

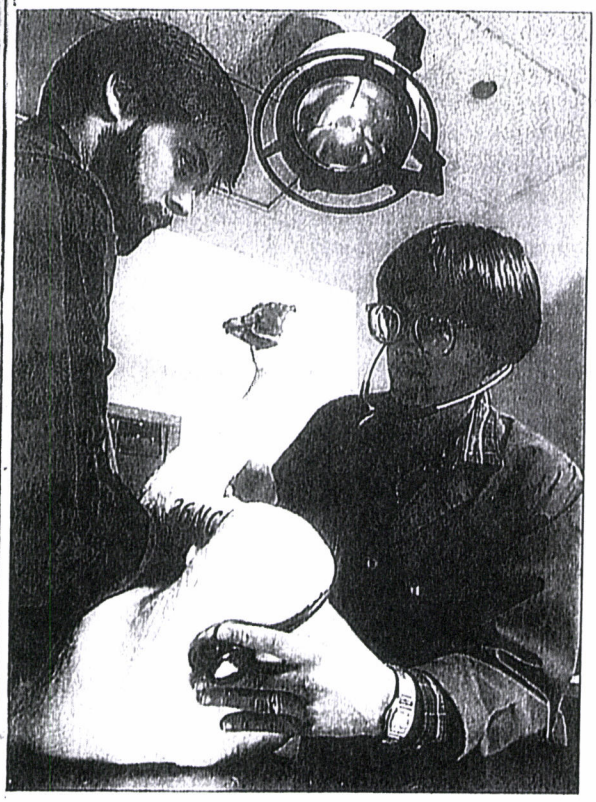
Some Yellowstone neighbors provide hay for starving animals (left), but others plot a far different fate for buffalo that leave the park.

PHIL HUBER

LARRY AIUPPY/SIPA

here," says Grover. "And the diving ducks will have to go someplace else."

Trouble is, for the most part there isn't a somewhere else. The Rainwater Basin Wetland Management District, the next stop in Nebraska for birds migrating north, is also hurting. Agriculture has taken away nine out of 10 of the Basin's original 4,000 marshes—once a place of hunting legends. Now the drought has taken most of the ponds that were left. "We're keeping seven ponds filled by pumping water from our 30 wells," says Rainwater's assistant manager Rick Poetter. "That is until the money runs out."



LAYNE KENNEDY

LAYNE KENNEDY

In Minnesota a vet tried to save a trumpeter swan that had ingested lead shot, which appear as small white balls in the X rays.

The Platte River itself, which is heavily used for irrigation, is at 10% of its historic width in some places. Each March and April about 80% of North America's sandhill cranes stop along the river on their way north. They normally forage in the wet meadowlands for about six weeks. This year the meadows are dry. Says Ken Strom, manager of the National Audubon Society's Rowe Sanctuary, a 2,200-acre area that borders on the Platte in Nebraska, "What I see year after year are the birds squeezing into a smaller and smaller area. I don't see them moving to another river. Then again, there *isn't* another river. What I fear is that eventually they're going to leave here in such poor condition they will fly north and fail to breed and raise young."

The continent's traditional duck nurseries, located in the prairie pothole country of North Dakota and southern Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan, are also in bad shape. These clay-lined sinks, which were formed by glaciers 10,000 years ago, rely on snowmelt to create the seasonal ponds where millions of ducks nest and raise their young. Although parts of the duck nurseries have received their best snows in several years, the region has been so dry for so long that no one can predict whether the snow will yield pond-producing runoff or simply soak into the parched ground.

"We're keeping our fingers crossed," says Terry Neraasen, chief biologist for Ducks Unlimited, Canada. "Most places still don't have enough snow to amount to much runoff, but we could get more." Otherwise, says Neraasen, "it's going to be real dicey."

Conditions in much of North Dakota aren't even good enough to be termed dicey. Some portions of the state have had significant snow accumulations, but the net effect can be unpredictable. At the Long Lake National Wildlife Refuge, the ground was so devoid of water earlier this winter that it didn't freeze solid. Says Mike Rabenberg, a biological technician specializing in water fowl at Long Lake, "At 10° below zero, I could stick a shovel into the ground up to the handle." While it usually takes nine to 10 inches of snow to yield one inch of water, a soil moisture analyst at the National Weather Service in Camp Springs, Md., recently calculated that one 24-inch snowfall in North Dakota was so cold and dry it would net only 1¼ inches of water.

Scientists will probably argue about the causes of last year's drought for years to come. Global warming, deforestation, localized changing of ocean temperatures, holes in the ozone layer and unusual sunspot activity may all play roles. What is known is that North America has experienced other unprecedented weather extremes in the last year. In September, for example, as Hurricane Gilbert rampaged across the Caribbean, an alltime barometric low of 26.13 was recorded. Less than five months later, a fierce Alaskan pressure system produced a record barometric high of 31.85. That high, followed by a series of bitter cold fronts, spelled disaster for many animals in the upper tier of the Lower 48.

Along Idaho's Henrys Fork, a tributary of the Snake River, wildlife rescuers resorted to taking trumpeter swans home to their bathtubs when the river, which is usually kept open by warm springs, froze over for a week. Water in the Henrys Fork is at an alltime low. In Idaho and Minnesota, trumpeters have died from lead poisoning because low-water levels have allowed the long-necked birds to pick up lead shot from pond bottoms as they feed.

There have been other wrenching scenes in the Northern Rockies, particularly in Idaho and in the Yellowstone National Park region of Wyoming and Montana. Starving moose have wandered through downtown Idaho Falls, bolting or breaking fences to feed on shrubs. In other areas of the state, wardens have erected paneling around farmers' haystacks to prevent looting by hungry antelope, deer, elk, moose and even a few notoriously people-shy bighorn sheep.

For each of the last seven years Yellowstone Park had enjoyed mild winters. As a result, the elk and buffalo

MIKE MAPLE/WOODFIN CAMP & ASSOC

Grover finds it hard to be optimistic about the sere conditions at Cheyenne Bottoms.

herds became unusually large. Then the region experienced early, unrelenting snowfalls last autumn and subzero temperatures this winter. Those factors, coupled with the park's worst drought in a century, have forced elk and buffalo outside the park boundaries in search of food. When that happened, agony and death plagued Yellowstone's perimeters.

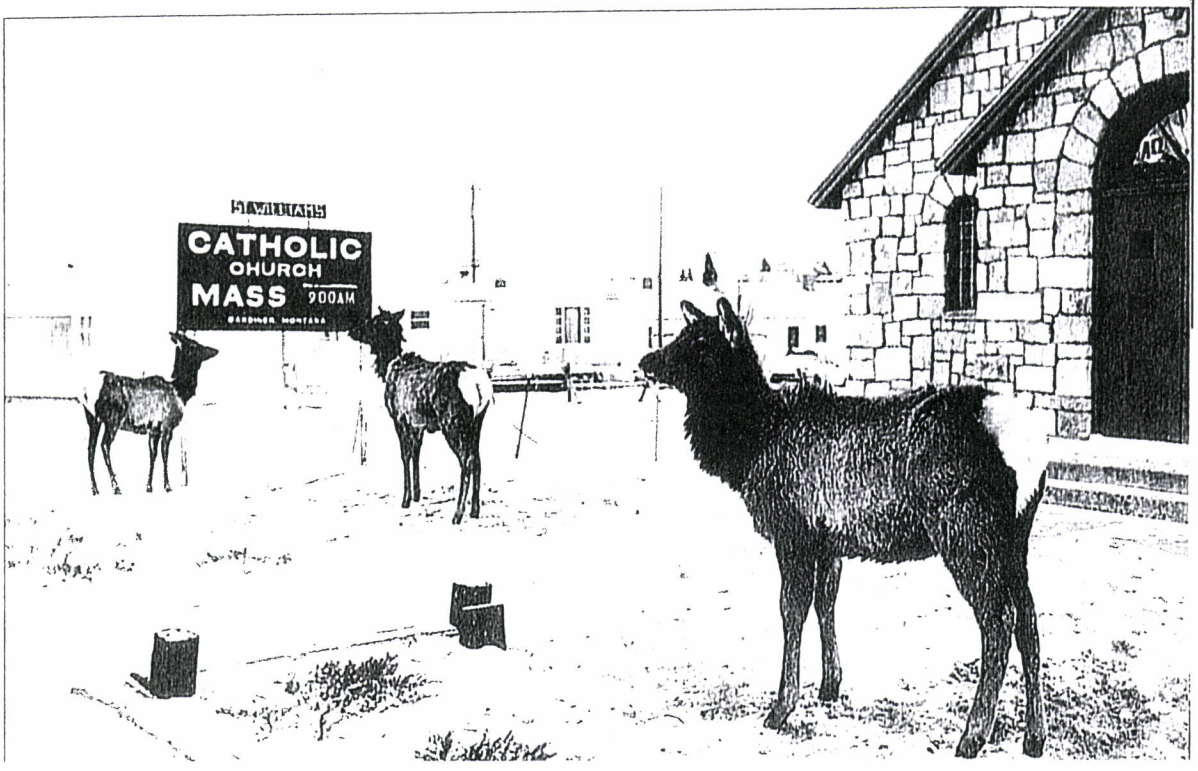
"It was a sad spectacle to see these magnificent creatures shivering along the roads and dying up in people's yards trying to find food," says Tim Egan, who covers the Pacific Northwest for *The New York Times*. "These, some of our largest mammals, are so desperate that they've lost their cautionary instincts." Egan adds that near Gardiner, Mont., one of the northern entrances to Yellowstone, at least one elk a day is being hit by a car.

The buffalo know nothing of park boundaries, nor of a Montana law that requires buffalo found outside the park to be killed because they might be carrying brucellosis, a disease that causes cows to abort. So park rangers can only watch as state-licensed hunters line up along Yellowstone's boundaries—sometimes only 10 to 20 feet from the buffalo—and blast away the instant the animals step off park property. "These are park buffalo," says Egan. "They don't know about hunting. Thus, even if they see their mates being shot on either side of them, they just stand there and look at the hunters." More than 500 buffalo (19% of the Yellowstone population) and some 2,300 (or 7%) of the park's elk have been shot.

Nothing can be done to bring water from the sky, and where water dwindles, a mad political race is on to see who gets what. When an Alaskan high sent record cold tumbling over Idaho earlier this winter, it dealt a death blow to thousands of trout in the Snake River. It's feared the cold also killed the young trout in the Henrys Fork. Irrigation dams upstream had caused the water level in those famed fly-fishing streams to drop to 25% to 50% of normal. And the Nevada Waterfowl Association—backed by an unlikely coalition of hunters, trappers, bird-watchers and the Nevada Humane Society—has been frantically raising money to buy water, at $750 an acre, for the Stillwater Refuge, a federal wetlands that has no freshwater rights.

Last year 20,000 birds at Stillwater died of botulism, in large part because of overcrowding and contamination caused by low water conditions. The refuge is now waiting for $1.2 million in federal funds to obtain water. The money can't come soon enough. Last Friday, Stillwater biologist Steve Thompson picked up a dead golden eagle, a barn owl and 56 ducks—all victims, he thinks, of low-water stress.

Stillwater may get the money it needs, but in most scrambles for water, wildlife usually ends up last in line. Fish, birds and mammals have no vote. Says Grover, surrounded by the dry marshlands at Cheyenne Bottoms, "When it comes down to who's going to get that last glass of water, it isn't going to be us." ■



PHIL HUBER

Yellowstone elk often wind up in the unlikeliest of places.

FEBRUARY 20, 1989 $2.00

THE S & L MESS: Bush's $200 Billion Bailout

TIME

BETRAYAL

"This was the most scandalous fact of all: that the security of Moscow station and the protection of many of America's most important global secrets depended on the integrity of a single young Marine stationed on the KGB's home turf."

From Moscow Station, a new book about the 1987 Marine spy scandal

MONTANA

Shades of Buffalo Bill

It brings back images of the great buffalo massacres of the 19th century. Since last October, Montana hunters have gunned down a record number of bison that have been roaming outside the bounds of fire-ravaged Yellowstone National Park, foraging on neighboring ranch and forest land. The state legislature made bison a big-game animal again in 1985, after game wardens had had to shoot 88 stray bison and hunters complained that the privilege should have been theirs.

Ranchers claim that the bison, in addition to damaging fences and depleting food needed by cattle, can infect their herds with brucellosis, a disease that causes cows to abort their calves—though there are no documented cases of such bison-to-cattle infections. More than 200 bison have been bagged so far this season. Government biologists say the toll will not deplete the park's bison population of 2,700, but animal-rights groups want federal authorities to provide feeding spots for the animals inside the park. "The object is to put a head on somebody's wall," says Ted Crail of the Animal Protection Institute in Sacramento. "That is no way to treat the animal that is symbolic of all our failures in the animal field." ■

Bison baggers: more than 200 have legally been shot by hunters

NEW JERSEY

Terrorist on The Turnpike

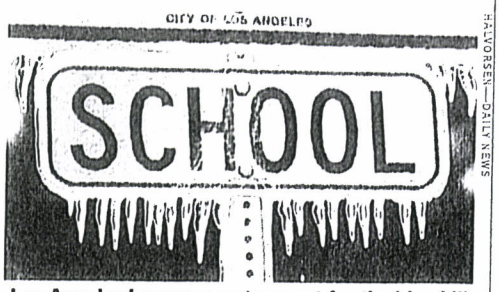
According to federal prosecutors, the terrorist Japanese Red Army has one less soldier on active duty these days. A federal judge in Newark last week sentenced Yu Kikumura, 36, to 30 years in prison for possession of three pipe bombs and a false passport. A Japanese national, Kikumura was arrested last April on the New Jersey Turnpike by a state trooper, who says he saw the bombs in the back seat of his car. Prosecutors believe he intended to plant them in the New York City area in retaliation for the U.S. air raid on Libya. U.S. District Judge Alfred J. Lechner Jr. said the bombs, packed with black powder and lead shotgun pellets, "were intended for flesh and blood, not bricks and mortar." ■

Kikumura

LOS ANGELES

A Blizzard in Tinseltown

Ah, Los Angeles. Sunshine, palm trees, snowballs. Snowballs? Yep—and kids whooshing down snow-covered hills on skateboards, while cars skidded on icy roads. During one magical day last week, as much as a foot of the white stuff fell across a four-county area in Southern California. Local children got a rare glimpse of what Northerners mean by winter. Debbie Uyeno and her family built a snowman in their front yard and even piled flakes into the hot tub. "I don't ever remember snow," said Debbie, 12. "It was fun." Not for everybody. More than 10,000 customers lost electrical power, and drifts forced the closing of parts of Interstate 5, California's main north-south artery, causing monumental traffic jams. The unusual weather left thousands of vacationers moping in Palm Springs and did frost damage to citrus groves and flowers scheduled to be picked for Valentine's Day. By the next day, though, most of the snow had melted, disappearing as suddenly as it had arrived. Maybe it was all just a special effect. ■



Los Angeles becomes a stage set for the big chill

ELECTIONS

Ku Klux Klandidate

David Duke claims to have abdicated the title of imperial wizard of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Now he wants a new one: Louisiana state legislator. Last month Duke, 38, finished first with 33% of the vote in a nonpartisan election for representative from Metairie, a white suburb of New Orleans. In a runoff this week he faces runner-up John Treen, 63, a local builder and the brother of former Governor David Treen. Duke denies he is a racist and says coyly that he supports "civil rights for all people." Duke, who says he heads an outfit called the National Association for the Advancement of White People, still has the same address and phone number as the local Ku Klux Klan headquarters. ■

ESPIONAGE

That Will Teach Him

They say a little learning is a dangerous thing. Ask Todd Patterson. He had just finished the sixth grade in Franklin Lakes, N.J., when he began compiling his own encyclopedia of all the nations of the world. He wrote to embassies—including the Soviet Union's—for information. Enter the FBI, which began investigating the boy and kept at it until it had built up a 17-page file. Now an 18-year-old high school senior, Patterson brought suit in May against the FBI to get access to the files. Last week a federal judge threw out the suit. After reviewing FBI documents that Patterson's lawyers were not allowed to see, U.S. District Judge Alfred M. Wolin decided the bureau had acted "in the interest of national security." The judge added that he hoped the FBI would expunge Patterson's file as it has offered to do, but Patterson's parents object that the bureau might start a new one. "Todd is still writing to foreign governments," says his father. Maybe Todd should have collected baseball cards. ■

AMERICA'S ADDICTION TO ADDICTIONS

U.S.News & WORLD REPORT

FEBRUARY 5, 1990

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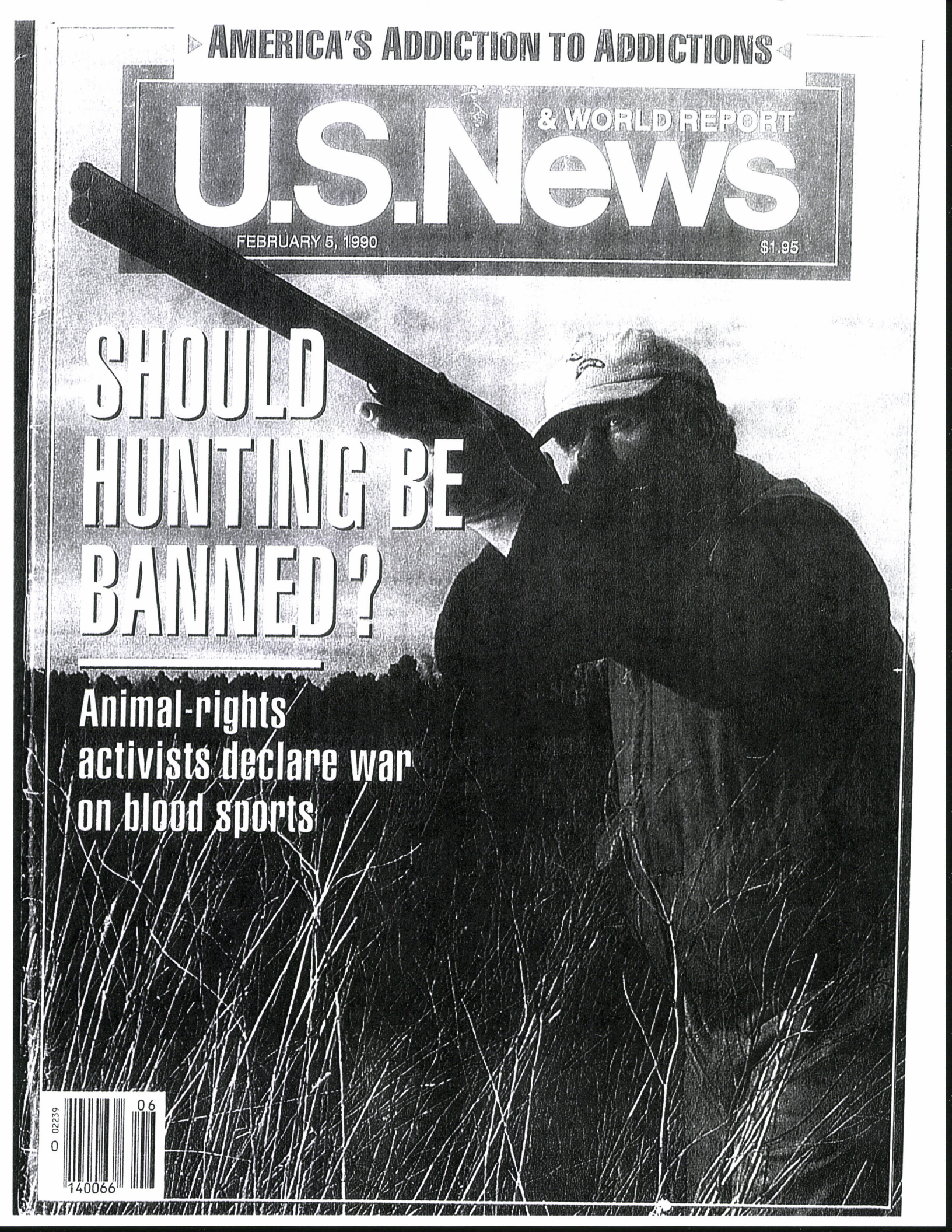

SHOULD HUNTING BE BANNED?

Animal-rights activists declare war on blood sports

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The AMERICAN HUNTER UNDER FIRE

Some 200 million birds and animals are killed annually by hunters. A bitter debate now rages: Is this a legitimate harvest or a wanton slaughter?

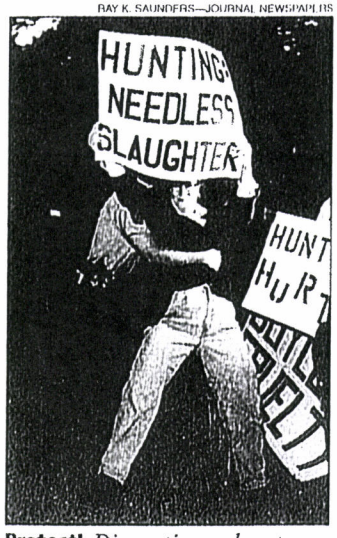
Bruce Wargo hoped to bag a brace of pheasant or grouse, perhaps a few cottontails during a hunting trip last October to Connecticut's Paugussett State Forest. What he got instead was a rude surprise. A covey of animal-rights activists flushed *him* from the brush. They dogged his every move, hectored him about the evils of hunting and promised to annoy him until he left the woods. When Wargo, 43, an auto-body-repair-shop owner from Monroe, Conn., raised his 20-gauge shotgun to shift its balance for carrying comfort, one blocked the muzzle with his bare hand and begged him not to shoot. "I said to the guy: 'Are you nuts?' " the hunter recalls. "If this kind of stuff goes on, somebody's gonna get accidentally killed."

Increasingly, the cacophony of air horns, loud music and angry shouting augments the crack of rifles and the blast of shotguns in the nation's fields, forests and wetlands as protesters attempt to block or disrupt hunts. After successfully turning the once obscure issues of laboratory animals and fur wearing into full-fledged national debates, animal activists now scent a new quarry. Several national organizations are spearheading the anti-hunting campaign and have scored early hits in courts and in state legislatures to block hunts. "We want to stigmatize hunting, we see it as the next logical target and we believe it is vulnerable," says Wayne Pacelle, national director of the Fund for Animals and organizer of the Paugussett protest.

Three broad questions dominate the debate. Is it moral and ethical for sentient creatures to be killed for sport or trophies? With many species dwindling due to environmental pressures, does hunting threaten to tip the balance against America's wildlife populations? Are hunters friends or foes of the environmental movement? If hunters cannot convince their potential adversaries in the conservation movement that they are anxious to preserve America's wild species, they will face a far greater challenge to their recreation than the one posed by animal-rights advocates.

This attack on the nation's Nimrods is one of several developments that portend major changes for hunters. Nearly 16 million Americans—7 percent of the population—bought hunting licenses last year to pursue what for some is a pastime, for others a passion. The burgeoning political battle to make hunters an endangered species comes at a time when America's wildlife is under mounting assault from other fronts. Urbanization and the resulting loss of wildlife habitat, particularly in riparian and wetland areas, along with rampant poaching for trophy animals and commercial gain are squeezing vulnerable populations from waterfowl to big game. Joel Scrafford, a senior agent with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Montana, believes that "at some point in the future, the public will look back and realize this was

RAY K. SAUNDERS—JOURNAL NEWSPAPERS



Protest! *Disrupting a hunt*

Timeless tableau. *Christopher Reiger, left, ne*

CHARLIE ARCHAMBAULT FOR *USN&WR*

his father George and friends: "The realization of how special our shared hunts are will only occur to Christopher years from now"

a pivotal juncture for saving our wild animals."

Shoot-anything Rambos. Even in places where game is plentiful, hunting restrictions are mounting. Farmers, fed up with so-called slob hunters, are increasingly denying permission to stalk their acreage or are charging hefty fees for the privilege. "We're seeing fewer skilled hunters who can cut a track and follow it all day," Scrafford laments. "Now, we see too many four-wheel-drive, assault-rifle, gun-and-run, shoot-anything yahoos who think they're Rambo."

Shrinking opportunities for good hunting on public land are promoting a steady rise in private game preserves where the challenge is minimal, fees are high, targets are often preselected and the kill is assured. Most dedicated game stalkers like Steve Judd, a student at Virginia's Radford University, say they relish the companionship, field craft and traditions of hunting more than the kill. "I don't care if I get a deer and neither do my friends," Judd says. "Being outside, tramping the hedgerows on a crisp morning, that's as important as shooting something. Killing is only a tiny part of the overall experience." Like others, the crew-cut economics major worries that in the distant future, hunting could evolve into a European-style activity where only the wealthy can afford to shoot on private reservations.

Not surprisingly, the ranks of hunters have dwindled by 700,000 since 1975. In an aging population, strenuous activities like hunting tend to lose their appeal. As people move from the countryside to the cities, convenient shooting opportunities shrink and other diversions beckon. The rise in single-parent homes means sons raised by mothers are far less likely to be initiated into blood sports. In some states, the hunting population has crashed like a herd of starving deer. California, which in 1970 had 750,000 licensed hunters, was down to 415,000 last year. Florida, with its relentless influx of urban retirees, is considered a ripe anti-hunting target. A referendum would most likely ban hunting there, fears National Rifle Association (NRA) Assistant Director of Hunter Services Dennis Eggers.

In the harvest-or-holocaust debate,

George Bush

THE HAPPY 'FIRST HUNTER'

When he hunts quail in south Texas, George Bush almost forgets he is President. He swaps bawdy stories with his Texas pals as they trudge through the sagebrush, and he finds himself shouting with joy when a covey explodes from underfoot. It is a time-honored male ritual that is almost too good to be true, says the President. "When you are walking out in a field and the quail are flushed, there's just a physical thrill," Bush told *U.S. News.* "It's the excitement factor, the outdoors, the love of nature, the beauty that's normally associated with it, the relaxation, the camaraderie. All these things come together."

An avid hunter for 25 years, Bush takes a break every December to spend a few days stalking through the mesquite trees and sagebrush of the Lazy F Ranch with his hunting buddies. They get up early—"well, not that early," he says, "about 7 o'clock"—eat a quick breakfast and jump into a Jeep provided by his host, Will Farish III, an old friend and owner of the 10,000-acre spread. They drive to a favorite pasture and let the dogs loose. "If they get a point, we shoot," Bush says. "If the dogs aren't doing their job, we move along. That's part of the real beauty of it all. We do a lot of walking." Last December, the presidential foursome bagged 20 quail and a 19-pound turkey, although Bush says his own performance is a "state secret."

SUSAN BIDDLE—WHITE HOUSE

At Lazy F Ranch. *President Bush and Will Farish III*

The President prides himself on being the nation's unofficial "first hunter." He adds, though: "I'm not a really good shot, but I'm not bad. When I'm shooting skeet, if I don't get 20 [out of 25] in one round, I get a little grumpy." Bush also grows annoyed when critics raise objections to the sport. Noting that about 30 protesters demonstrated against his quail expedition last December, condemning the hunt as barbaric and bloodthirsty, Bush told *U.S. News,* "That group that was down there, I cannot identify with that. When you talk about game management, you talk about deer dying down there rather than thinning out the herds. I do not identify with them at all." But the President was careful to point out that "I am not a game hunter" and probably could not bring himself to shoot a deer. He prefers shooting quail or dove. "And I like eating what I go after," he notes.

Bush often paraphrases naturalist Izaak Walton. "The days a man spends fishing or hunting should not be deducted from the time he spends on earth," he says. "That's why I'll be a great conservation and environmental President. I plan to fish and hunt as much as I can."

by Kenneth T. Walsh

hunters, with their vested interest in maintaining a healthy supply of prey, regard themselves as front-line conservationists. Since President Theodore Roosevelt, an avid hunter, founded the federal wildlife refuge system in 1903, hunters have invested their dollars and energies to preserve habitat and restore game populations depleted by development, disease, pollution and indiscriminate overkill.

Without hunting, enthusiasts argue, game species would decrease in public value and the will to preserve them would erode. Hunters also point out that nonhunting wildlife lovers—who pay no license fees or excise taxes—can photograph or view deer, waterfowl, upland birds and other game species year-round. Hunting advocates note they are the prime revenue source for preserving nonendangered wildlife. Last year, they paid $517 million for licenses, duck stamps and excise taxes on equipment and ammunition, much of it used to finance game-research-and-management programs and to help purchase habitat that benefits all creatures. Wyoming rancher, outfitter and professional conservationist John Turner, who currently heads the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, deplores the efforts to end hunting. "If you eliminate this constituency, you lose the greatest source of conservation revenue," Turner says. "You also do away with a vital cultural and historical aspect of American life."

This legacy harkens back at least 150 years, when the nation teemed with wildlife. Sixty million bison, 100,000 grizzly bears, 50,000 bald eagles and uncounted herds of elk, antelope and bighorn sheep inhabited the frontier. Passing flocks of passenger pigeons darkened the sky for 2 to 3 hours at a time, and varmint shooters could plink away in prairie-dog towns 25 miles in diameter. The nation's woodlands, rangelands and wetlands were alive with mountain lions, bobcats, wolves, black bears, beavers, otters, minks and waterfowl. It was a hunter's paradise. And it was almost lost.

Greedy and indiscriminate killing for meat, fur, feathers and sport in the latter half of

THE HUNTING TOLL ON U.S. WILDLIFE

Animals taken by licensed hunters in the 1988-89 season

Mammals			
Rabbit	25 mil.	Mountain goat	1,200
Squirrel	22 mil.	Brown/grizzly bear	1,100
White-tailed deer	4 mil.	Wolf	1,000
Mule deer	600,000	Bison	750
Wild turkey	350,000	Wolverine	700
Coyote	250,000	Musk ox	90
Pronghorn antelope	115,000	**Birds**	
Elk	102,000	Mourning dove	50 mil.
Black bear	21,000	Quail	28 mil.
Caribou	21,000	Pheasant	20 mil.
Moose	12,000	Ruffed grouse	6 mil.
Javelina	10,000	Duck	5.2 mil.
Bighorn sheep	2,400	Goose	1.3 mil.
Mountain lion	1,500	Chukar partridge	1 mil.

Note: Figures do not account for animals killed by poachers or animals killed on mammal shooting preserves. *USN&WR*—Basic data: Compiled by the Fund for Animals with data from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and state fish and game agencies

the 19th century pushed several of these species close to extinction, and the last passenger pigeon died in 1914 in the Cincinnati Zoo. This slaughter prompted new hunting laws and the rise of the modern conservation movement, which brought many of these populations back from the brink. Today, some heavily managed game species like white-tailed deer, pheasant and quail have become plentiful, but observers on both sides of the gunsight believe much of the nation's wildlife is approaching a critical time.

Animal-rights activists argue that silencing the guns will help such regionally hard-pressed species as black bear, antelope, mountain lion and bighorn sheep. A hunting ban would also bring respite for the nation's ducks—an environmental-barometer species that has been decimated by the loss of wetlands in its northern breeding and southern wintering areas. Despite increasingly restrictive seasons and bag limits, last autumn's flight was down to 64 million birds, slightly above 1985's record low of 62 million. From 1969 through 1979, annual flights averaged 91.5 million before the decline began. Another ominous indicator: Breeding populations of 9 of the 10 key duck species were also down last year. Only canvasbacks increased in number, by a modest 12 percent.

While most mainstream conservation organizations tacitly support tightly controlled hunting, some are beginning to challenge the hunter-dominated state fish and game agencies. The conservationists want the agencies to end their concentration on enhancing game populations and devote more attention to other wildlife. Last week, the Animal Legal Defense Fund sued to challenge the Massachusetts Fisheries and Wildlife Board, which requires a majority of the seven-member commission to be licensed hunters or trappers. "Having hunters oversee wildlife," says Pacelle of the Fund for Animals, "is like having Dracula guard the blood bank."

Pacelle argues that ending such widespread practices as clearing brushland, damming streams and killing predators to boost deer, waterfowl and upland game birds will mean more habitat for everything from songbirds to varmints. More important, it will restore a more naturally balanced ecosystem. "No wildlife resource agency in the country has a coherent systematic approach to preserve habitat and prevent massive extinctions of plant and animal life," believes Sara Vickerman, regional director of Defenders of Wildlife in the Pacific Northwest.

Rising public opposition. It is that emerging challenge from mainstream environmentalists that could be most devastating to hunters over time as growing numbers of Americans are attracted to the ecology movement. Moreover, there seems to be a latent sentiment against hunters that might be tapped by their opponents. Hunting for meat or sport has been a critical element in America's self-reliant pioneer tradition, but today's attitudes depend largely on how and why animals are killed. Studies by Yale Prof. Stephen Kellert indicate steadily rising public opposition. While more than 80 percent of Americans approve of hunting to put game on the table—be it a native Alaskan subsistence hunter or a white-collar suburbanite with a taste for low-cholesterol venison—80 percent also feel hunting for trophy heads to mount on the wall is wrong. Some 60 percent disapprove of hunting merely for sport or recreation. About 1 in 3 Americans, according to Kellert's studies, favors a total ban.

Building on this sentiment is the goal of the anti-hunting forces, who launched their campaign in earnest about a decade ago. Demonstrations in the field have become so widespread that powerful hunting lobbies in 35 states have persuaded lawmakers to make it illegal to harass hunters. Most other states have similar laws pending, and there is a corresponding bill with more than 50 cosponsors in Congress. Some 30 states also make it a crime to haze animals for their protection during hunting season. This projects an improbable scenario where it is legal to put a bullet into a deer but unlawful to scream at it: "Vamoose! You're gonna get shot!"

CHARLIE ARCHAMBAULT FOR USN&WR

'WE AREN'T THOUGHTLESS THUGS'

Reiger, conservation editor of Field & Stream *and a hunter, angler and naturalist for 40 years, makes the case for hunting:*

When deer populations outgrow their habitat, nature demands they be culled but doesn't care how. Why not allow qualified shooters to restore the balance through hunting? Is it more inhumane to kill individual deer with a single shot or let the entire herd die slowly from disease and starvation?

The anti-hunters are invariably long on name-calling and short on scientifically based suggestions for solving complex wildlife conservation problems. They have only a relatively recent and highly erratic record of concern. They don't understand nature.

The real enemies of wildlife, from poachers to polluting industries, are ignored in favor of cartoon characterizations of sportsmen as thoughtless thugs who must be purged from society before wildlife can be restored to the Peaceable Kingdom.

Protectionists claim that we're bloodthirsty killers. In fact, killing only involves a split second of the innumerable hours we spend surrounded by and observing nature. We kill to hunt, not the other way around. The ritual and traditions, and the emphasis on ethical behavior, liken this sport more to religion than the sciences we rely on to help perpetuate wildlife.

ALON REINER—GER FOR US NEWS

'THEY ARE BLOODTHIRSTY NUTS'

Amory, founder and president of Fund for Animals *and an animal-rights activist since 1946, makes the case against hunting:*

Hunters claim they are saving animals from overpopulation and starvation. But the only animal for whom they make this argument is deer, which are artificially managed to produce large numbers to hunt and which represent less than 1.5 percent of the more than 200 million animals and birds they kill each year. This doesn't count the millions that are crippled or orphaned and die painful, lingering deaths. This problem gets worse each year as hunting with weapons like bows, muzzleloaders and pistols increases in popularity. And animals aren't the only victims. In 1988, 177 people were killed and 1,719 injured, many innocent bystanders walking in the woods or on their own property.

These bloodthirsty nuts claim they provide a service for the environment. Nonsense! A hunter goes into the woods to kill something, period. The slogan of the Fund for Animals is "Support Your Right to Arm Bears." They deserve that right, at the rate these magnificent animals are being slaughtered. And for what? So some Ernest Hemingway "wannabe" can brag about his exploits or have a bearskin rug in his den. Hunting is an antiquated expression of macho self-aggrandizement, with no place in a civilized society.

However, anti-hunting forces have scored some important court victories. In the first definitive constitutional test of harassment laws, Connecticut's law was determined not to be a compelling state interest and was voided by a U.S. appeals court. That's why game wardens stood by and watched as protesters hounded Bruce Wargo from Paugussett State Park last October. Another legal challenge is now before the courts in Maryland, where the harassment law is regarded as the national model. If it is struck down, anti-hunters are confident they'll benefit from a domino effect.

In California, opponents have blocked mountain-lion and bear hunts by convincing judges that state wildlife biologists have no accurate count of these dwindling big-game populations. Next June, Californians will vote on a ballot initiative that will be closely watched by the hunting fraternity. The measure would ban mountain-lion hunting except where human life or livestock is threatened. Activists have also stymied bear hunting in New Jersey, blocked plans to initiate dove hunting in Michigan, Ohio and New York and halted expansion of hunting in Texas state parks.

The activists' strategy also relies on the emotional issue of cruelty. Last autumn, a number of demonstrations were targeted at bowhunting for deer, which protesters hate because so many animals are crippled by arrows and wander off to suffer lingering deaths. Studies in Texas over 15 years show that only half the deer hit by bowhunters are retrieved, compared with 90 percent for gunners.

Anti-hunting forces reaped a public-relations bonanza last winter, when 569 bison lumbered over the northern boundary of Yellowstone National Park in search of food. Each was shot by a lottery-winning hunter at virtual point-blank range. Justification for the slaughter was that the bison posed a threat—albeit remote—of transmitting brucellosis to Montana cattle. Published accounts and gory videotape of exultant hunters gunning down hundreds of the nation's most enduring historical wildlife icons enraged many Americans and resulted in an emergency U.S. congressional hearing. For many serious hunters priding themselves on outdoor skills and marksmanship, the spectacle of the bison-shooting gallery was disturbing. "It resulted in bad press," agrees the NRA's Eggers. "People in big cities didn't like it, and I understand their feelings."

Seeking common ground. Largely lost as the hunting-morality debate intensifies is the fact that many proponents on both sides of the issue share the same basic goal: Preserving the vitality of these treasured species. Front-line observers like U.S. Fish and Wildlife chief Turner believe there is enough common ground between hunters and the nation's 135 million nonhunting wildlife enthusiasts that some kind of reconciliation oriented toward environmental issues ought to be possible. "The real tragedy [for wildlife] is pollution, pesticides, urbanization, deforestation, hazardous waste, lack of water and wetland destruction," Turner says. "I get tears in my eyes when I see this self-destructive waste of energy by the anti-hunting groups. Let's focus our main energies on mutual interests and arm-wrestle on the other."

One hopeful sign for those like Turner who hope for a narrowing of differences is the revulsion hunters and nonhunters alike feel for the dramatic rise in commercial poaching and unlawful trophy hunting that reached record levels in the Rocky Mountain West last year. Asian demand for gallbladders of bear and antlers of elk and antelope, both regarded in the Orient as having valuable medicinal properties, is exerting tremendous pressure on these animals.

Illegal hunters face little threat of arrest from the thinly spread force of 5,200 federal and state wildlife enforcement officers. World-class elk, moose, deer, mountain goats and bighorn sheep protected year-round in Yellowstone, Glacier, Denali, Olympic and other crown-jewel national parks are now being killed by trophy hunters brazenly invading these once sacrosanct preserves. Habitat destruction, the single biggest threat to wildlife, also makes life easier for poach-

ers by squeezing game into smaller areas, thus making them more vulnerable. And poaching's negative effect is twofold. While commercial hunting often ravages local populations, the frantic competition for record-book trophies has perhaps a more insidious effect by robbing the gene pool of the biggest, healthiest and best of the species. "More and more people are competing for trophies out of fear that they'd better get them now or there won't be any left," says 25-year veteran enforcement agent Joel Scrafford. He notes that wealthy collectors will pay unscrupulous guides up to $5,000 to shoot a grizzly and $45,000 to kill the four native species of North American sheep—hunting's so-called grand slam.

Federal sting operations have smashed several organized poaching rings, and conservation organizations

KEVIN HORAN FOR *USN&WR*

Poacher haul. *Agent Scrafford and eagles*

have joined the fight. A public appeal for contributions by the Izaak Walton League of America, a conservation and pro-hunting organization, raised $600,000 to purchase a helicopter and two airboats for use by agents in their antipoaching efforts. The National Parks and Conservation Association has set up a national toll-free hot line—(800) 448-NPCA—to report poaching in the national parks.

Outside this realm, though, it is still an open question whether hunters and their foes will seek common ground or confrontation. On their choice may depend the future well-being of America's ever precarious, increasingly threatened wildlife heritage. ■

by Michael Satchell

UNCLE SAM'S WAR ON WILDLIFE

Killing pests and predators may help farmers, but animal lovers call it an outrage

The image at once fascinates and repels: Severed heads of 11 mountain lions stacked beneath a tree and photographed anonymously last June by an angry Arizona state wildlife employe. They are one fourth of the 44 lions trapped and killed in Arizona last year by professional hunters working for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in a little-known nationwide program called Animal Damage Control (ADC). For rancher Mick Holder, the grisly tableau reflects "a God-given right to protect our own"; for Steve Johnson, a Tucson conservation consultant, "an outrageous use of public funds and an ugly, ugly business."

This year, the ADC program will spend $29.4 million in federal dollars—$3.8 million more than 1989—plus roughly $15 million in state funds to destroy vast numbers of mammals and birds considered predators or pests. They are killed because they eat young livestock on remote Western rangelands, raid crops in Midwestern fields, steal catfish fry from Southern aquaculture ponds, gobble grain in cattle feedlots, turn leafy suburbs into noisy roosts or foul downtown public buildings. They are trapped, snared, poisoned, shot from helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft, chased down with dogs or burned out of their dens. The toll in 1988 included 4.6 million birds—mostly blackbirds, grackles and starlings; 76,000 coyotes; nearly 30,000 beavers, skunks and raccoons; some 300 black bears, and 200 mountain lions. Nearly 400 pet dogs and 100 domestic cats were also accidentally trapped or poisoned.

Making America safe for sheep. Predator-control programs have poisoned vast numbers of Western eagles, killed all the lions east of Texas and the Rocky Mountain states except for a sickly, inbred handful of Florida panthers, and almost wiped out the grizzly and wolf in the Lower 48 states. Critics fear that ADC's drive to make America safe for cattle and sheep threatens the lion and bear populations in several Western states.

Until 1986, ADC was the responsibility of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. As the conservation ethic strengthened during the 1970s and 1980s, ADC was steadily reduced, leaving Western ranchers unhappy and conservationists lobbying to deliver the *coup de grâce*. Finally, Western members of Congress got the program switched to a friendly Department of Agriculture and the program rebounded.

Elements of the ADC program belie financial logic. The latest available reports show that California in 1988 spent $3.2 million to kill 32,368 mammals—almost $100 for each dead critter. The animals were blamed for causing nearly $1.4 million in livestock, poultry and crop losses, but the cost of killing the predators was more than double the amount needed to compensate farmers who were not indemnified.

In some places predators are indiscriminately hunted down even when they kill relatively few livestock—a practice that infuriates critics of ADC. In Nevada, according to the state's 1988 report, government hunters shot 41 scarce mountain lions suspected of killing 520 lambs and sheep and a single calf—a little over one kill per lion each month. Also shot were 109 ravens blamed for taking: "20 lambs, 2 calves, 50 hen eggs and 25 golf balls (valued at $2 each) from golf courses." Opponents are doubly angry because the livestock in many places is grazing on public rangeland leased for just over $22 a year per head. Ranchers get the land at this rock-bottom rate in return for sharing it with wildlife. Conservationists argue that losing a few lambs or calves should be part of the price for this hefty federal subsidy.

Proponents justify the ADC program as a subsidy to protect farmers and hold down food prices. And there are elements that critics do not protest. ADC helps to keep birds away from the nation's airports—a vital safety measure. It targets predators that prey on endangered species, such as coyotes raiding whooping-crane nests. The program also employs nonlethal means of control such as noise or physical barriers.

Wildlife biologist John Grandy of the Humane Society of the U.S. says studies show that wiping out predators does little to reduce livestock losses, especially from the amazingly adaptable coyote. "It's a

At taxpayer expense. *Heads of mountain lions shot as predators by government hunters*

THE GOVERNMENT'S KILL

The wildlife taken by federal Animal Damage Control program in 1988

Mammals	Intentionally killed	Inadvertently killed
Coyote	76,033	17
Skunk	15,239	102
Beaver	9,143	28
Raccoon	5,348	1,117
Opossum	5,329	505
Fox	5,195	1,155
Bobcat	1,163	63
Badger	939	555
Porcupine	799	935
Nutria	612	21
Prairie dog	538	0
Rat/mouse	505	0
Hog (feral)	392	17
Muskrat	323	63
Bear (black)	289	2
Marmot	258	0
Mountain lion	203	4
Russian boar	192	5
Rabbit	186	231
Cat (domestic)	178	104
Ground squirrel	159	24
Dog (domestic)	151	393
Javelina	0	764
Birds		
Blackbird	4,453,842	(includes grackles and starlings) 1
Pigeon	7,982	0
Egret	6,729	0
Other animals	2,398	342
Total	**4,594,088**	**6,448**

Note: No animals were killed in Conn., Del., Fla., Iowa, Kans., Me., Md., Mass., Mich., Mo., N.C., R.I., S.C., Vt., W.Va., D.C.
USN&WR—Basic data: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Animal Damage Control program annual state reports, 1988

psychological salve for ranchers," says Grandy. "It makes them feel better, but it's a stupid waste of taxpayer money and a national disgrace."

"We serve agriculture." Such criticism rankles Bob Acord, the ADC acting deputy administrator. It is easy to take that position from an urban viewpoint, he believes; quite another to experience losses on the ranch or the farm. "Our objective is not to kill everything in sight," Acord says. "We serve agriculture. We want to see more meat, wool, sunflowers and catfish reach the market."

Nowhere is the issue focused more sharply than in Arizona, where ADC trappers and ranchers reported killing 60 lions and 18 black bears last year. State officials suspect that dozens more of each species met the same fate. Ranchers losing livestock can legally kill predators at any time, and some operate on such a slim profit margin that a few marauding cougars or bruins could spell financial disaster. "These are small businessmen, not cattle barons," says Arizona Cattle Growers' Association Executive Vice President Pam Neal.

An unusual alliance of animal protectionists, big-game hunters and the Arizona Game and Fish Commission is supporting a bill in the State Legislature that would impose tighter controls on killing these carnivores. The backers fault ranchers for expanding their leases into areas inhabited by the predators and for allowing their cows to drop calves in rugged country where they are easy pickings. "The real issue with the whole ADC program is public money used to kill public wildlife, often on public land, with no public input—all to benefit a handful of heavily subsidized ranchers and farmers," says Tom Woods, chairman of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission.

In ruggedly conservative Arizona, where cattle growers are a tiny, powerful lobby, ADC will be as tough to corner and kill as a wily old coyote. But bigger threats loom from far beyond the sand and saguaro. Investigators from the congressional General Accounting Office have visited Arizona to assess the lion and bear killing in preparation for a critical analysis of the nationwide ADC program. Animal protectionists, aiming to block hunting everywhere, may find Uncle Sam's unpopular and expensive hunt an easy target. ■

by Michael Satchell with Joannie M. Schrof

ACROSS THE USA:

STATESLINE

FROM USA TODAY'S NATIONAL NEWS NETWORK

Buffalo battle: Conservationists vs. the ranchers

By Debbie Howlett
USA TODAY

An enduring symbol of the American West, the buffalo, is at the heart of a dispute between Montana cattle ranchers and conservationists.

As thriving herds of the behemoths — once hunted to near extinction — migrate from Yellowstone National Park in search of winter forage, ranchers in southern Montana worry bison will mix with cattle and spread brucellosis, a disease that could mean ruin for a rancher.

"Bison in Yellowstone Park are of great value to all of us. Bison outside Yellowstone Park can only offer problems," says rancher Jim Stermitz.

Montana has tried to protect ranchers by killing the bison as foraging herds move out of Yellowstone into Montana.

So far this year, 11 male bison have been killed. Last year, hunters and state officials shot 569 bison of about 3,000 that live in Yellowstone — the largest kill of wild bison in almost 108 years.

"The government is favoring the interests of domestic cattle over cherished wildlife," says Wayne Pacelle of the Fund for Animals, which filed suit to stop the killings. "It reflects the cattle baron mentality that exists in Montana."

The state held a public hearing Thursday in Helena on the issue and is expected to make a decision next week on how to deal with the migrating bison this winter. A permanent plan is expected in 1991.

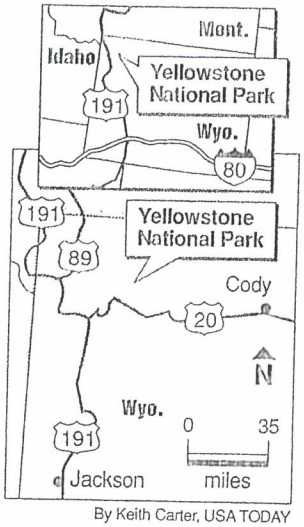
But between now and then there will be much wrangling — and likely a stalemate until the permanent plan is drawn.

▶ Montana has asked the U.S. Department of Agriculture to quarantine Yellowstone until the permanent plan is developed.

James Glosser, director of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, is giving the idea serious thought. "Why should we have one vestige of infection left?" he says.

▶ Democratic state Rep. Bob Raney of Livingston has proposed a moratorium on hunting through 1991.

Across the USA, ranchers have spent nearly $1 billion



By Keith Carter, USA TODAY

ALABAMA

MONTGOMERY — Dist. Atty. Sam LeMaister pleaded innocent to federal extortion charges. He is accused of extorting money in return for dropping cases. Trial is set Feb. 4. ... **BIRMINGHAM** — Saturday performance by rap group 2 Live Crew was canceled. Promoter cited security concerns, but official at 5,500-seat Boutwell Auditorium partly blamed low ticket sales. Group was cleared earlier this year of obscenity charges.

ALASKA

FAIRBANKS — Minimum number of city police officers will be cut to 2 from 3 on weekday shifts; to 3 from 4 on Friday, Saturday nights starting Tuesday, Police Chief Richard Cummings said. Catalyst: budget cuts. ... **KOTZEBUE** — Drug-testing plan for job seekers, current NANA Regional Corp. staffers in line for promotions will be debated next week, officials said. Company manages land given to Alaskan Natives living in northwest part of state.

ARIZONA

PHOENIX — Drug-testing plan for job seekers, current Maricopa County staffers suspected of using drugs may go before Board of Supervisors by February, officials said. Drug tests for police officers began last month. ... **TEMPE** — 300 were evacuated after fire in Club UM — nightclub in historic 1888 Chipman-Peterson building. Nobody was seriously injured; fire may have begun in deli below, officials said. Damage: $500,000.

ARKANSAS

LITTLE ROCK — 35,000 Arkansas Power & Light customers lost power when iced tree limbs fell on power lines. Officials said they hoped to restore power to all homes by today. ... **FORT SMITH** — Ron Fields — lawyer appointed to fill final weeks of Steve Clark's term as state attorney general — resigned to become prosecutor here. Clark resigned when convicted in November of misusing state-issued credit card.

CALIFORNIA

SACRAMENTO — Community college officials filed lawsuit to block federal order that state's 107 schools test pupils who get federal aid, lack high school diplomas, GEDs. Officials say rules — effective Tuesday — are unclear, impossible to implement; may cut $200 million in funding, pupil loans. ... **SAN DIEGO** — Zoo's elephant exhibit is dangerous, Humane Society officials said. Cited: Barn needs insulated floors, elephant walkway is too narrow. Cata-

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Across the USA, ranchers have spent nearly $1 billion over 30 years eradicating brucellosis from their herds.

The disease, which causes cows to abort, is so tightly controlled that if one head of cattle turns up infected, the entire herd is quarantined for a year. Such action could decimate many of the ranchers like Stermitz, with 100 head of cattle. "The slaughter as they come out of Yellowstone is a management tool," he says.

"It's like shooting a cow in the barnyard," counters University of California at Davis ecologist Dirk Van Vuren.

Van Vuren says cattle infected with brucellosis can indeed ruin a rancher, but that the disease has been spread from bison to cattle only in the laboratory, and that wild elk probably are a greater danger to cattle.

He advocates allowing the bison to migrate in segregated valleys of the Gravelly and Madison ranges.

And he sees a historical context.

"It's really more than just group of bison," Van Vuren says. "It's the only herd descended from the original inhabitants of America. That adds something to the herd."

AP

IN THE HUNT: Jim Slayton of Helena, Mont., poses with bison he killed on Veterans Day.

100,000 bison survive

Before the railroads came, 120 years ago, tens of millions of buffalo roamed the Great Plains.

By 1902, there were but 20 living wild in the USA — all of them at Yellowstone National Park.

From those few bison — the zoologically correct name for North American buffalo — 100,000 now survive in the USA. The largest wild herd, about 3,000, is at Yellowstone.

In one generation, from 1860 until 1883, the bison was hunted to near extinction. Though railroad crews ate large numbers of bison, most were slaughtered by men who shipped the hides east to leather tanneries and left the animal carcass to rot. In two years, 1871-72, 8 million bison were slaughtered by hunters.

The 569 bison killed in Montana two years ago was the largest kill since 1883, when hide hunters ambushed the last intact herd of bison, killing 300,000.

Horn needs insulated floors, elephant walkway is too narrow. Catalyst: Sunday death of elephant Maya after fall into moat. Zoo spokesman said improvements are being made.

COLORADO

DENVER — Talks between public school teachers, administrators should start within days, union official said. Among issues are money, benefit plan contributions, appraisal system. Jan. 7 strike would affect 59,000 pupils, 3,000 teachers. ... GREELEY — Harry Brown, 21 — son of U.S. Sen.-elect Hank Brown — pleaded no contest to harassment. He was accused of slapping man, ordering him to recite Pledge of Allegiance July 14. Judge ordered him to get evaluation for alcohol abuse.

CONNECTICUT

HARTFORD — 50 people held vigil at state Capitol to support proposed state income, other taxes instead of slashing spending to combat $2.1 billion budget deficit. Vigil was to call attention to impact cuts would have on families, children. ... ESSEX — Clark Thompson, 60, Susan Sanderson, 52, were in stable condition after fire, explosion at marina that destroyed 2 boats. Cause was being probed.

DELAWARE

ELLENDALE —Sussex County's '91 celebration of Martin Luther King's birthday will be Jan. 12 at Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church. Highlight: launching of program for civil, church groups to fix up abandoned, dilapidated area houses. ... WILMINGTON — 330 vacationers from New England will converge on Hotel du Pont for 14th annual Brandywine Valley New Year's Eve tour. Planned: dinner, dance.

D.C.

Mayor Barry named bank executive Patricia Mathews head of new 40-member regional panel to deal with AIDS crisis. $5 million federal grant will fund study of health delivery systems here; in Maryland, Virginia suburbs. ... Tickets went on sale for prayer breakfast, inaugural ball during D.C. Mayor-elect Sharon Pratt Dixon's Wednesday swearing-in. Cost: $20 for breakfast, $50 for ball.

FLORIDA

MIAMI — EPA dropped objections to Jack Nicklaus-designed golf course, residential development on edge of Biscayne National Park after plans were altered to keep project out of protected mangrove stands. Decision ends 3-year battle between Old Cutler Bay developers, EPA. ... CAPE CANAVERAL — State budget shortfall could force University of Central Florida to close Solar Energy Center — opened in '74 — to save $3.5 million, center director said. Facility employs 100.

GEORGIA

ATLANTA — Downtown hotels have beefed up security, banned

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